GER AILES: THE ANGRIEST MAN IN TELEVISION By David Brock

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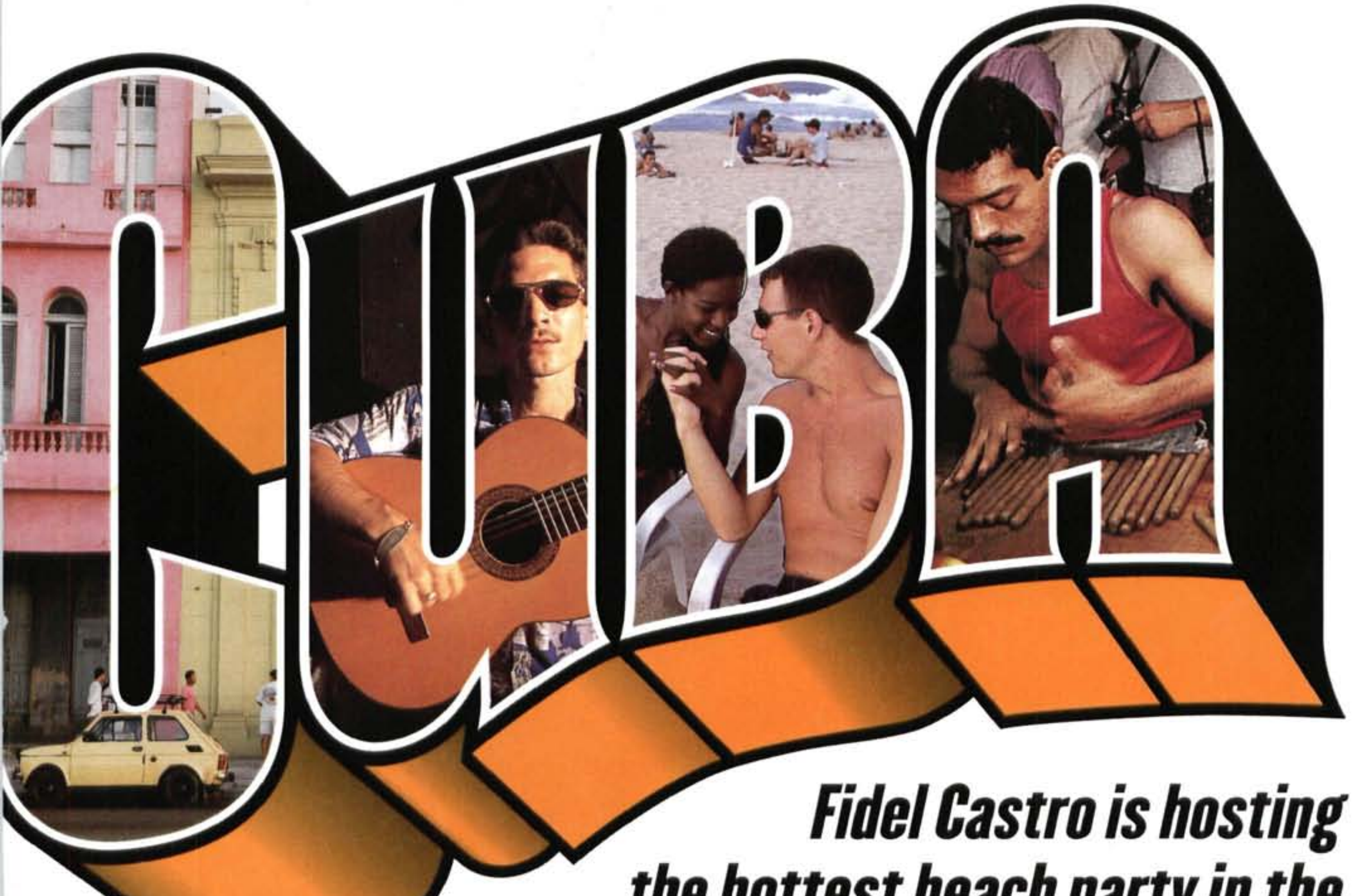

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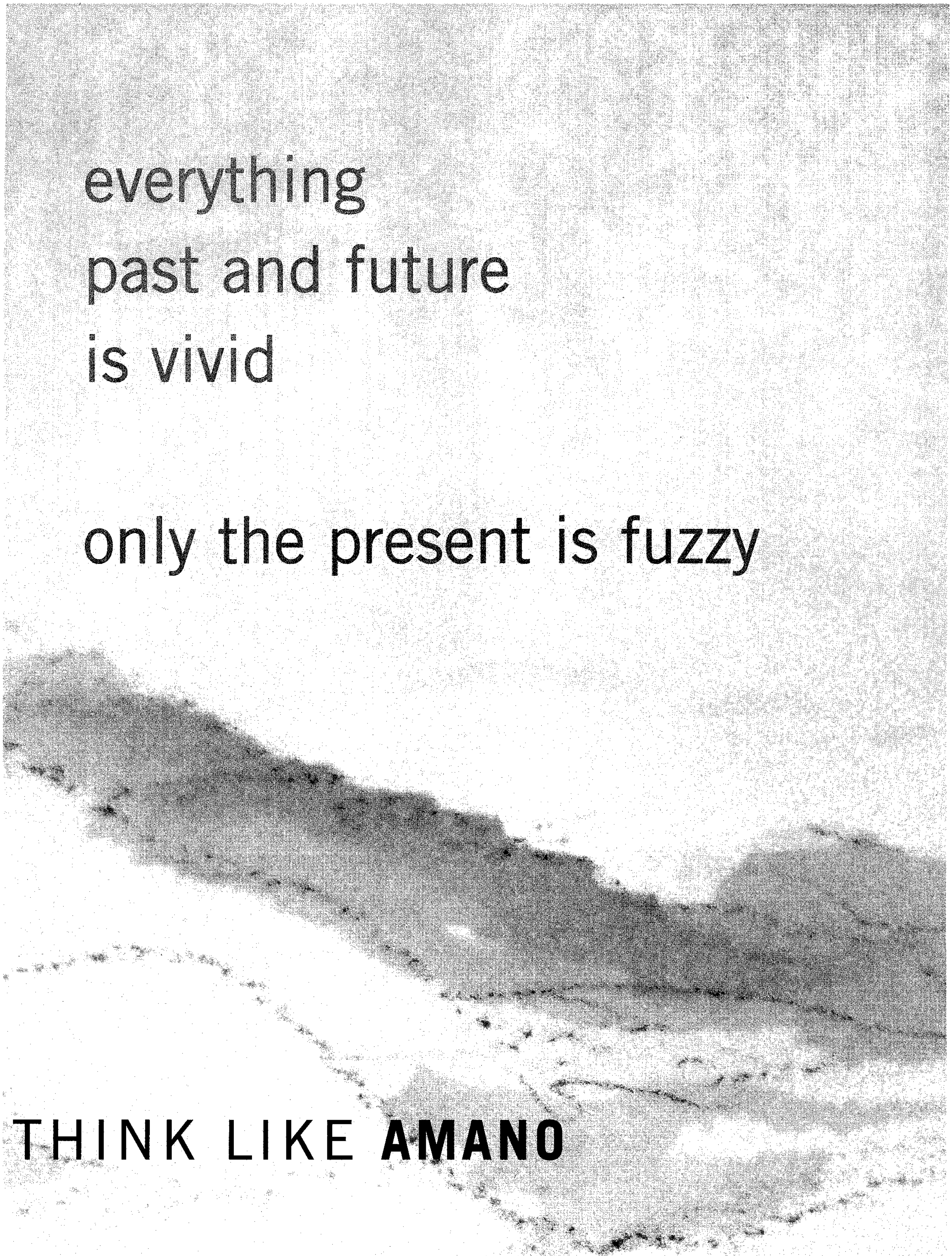
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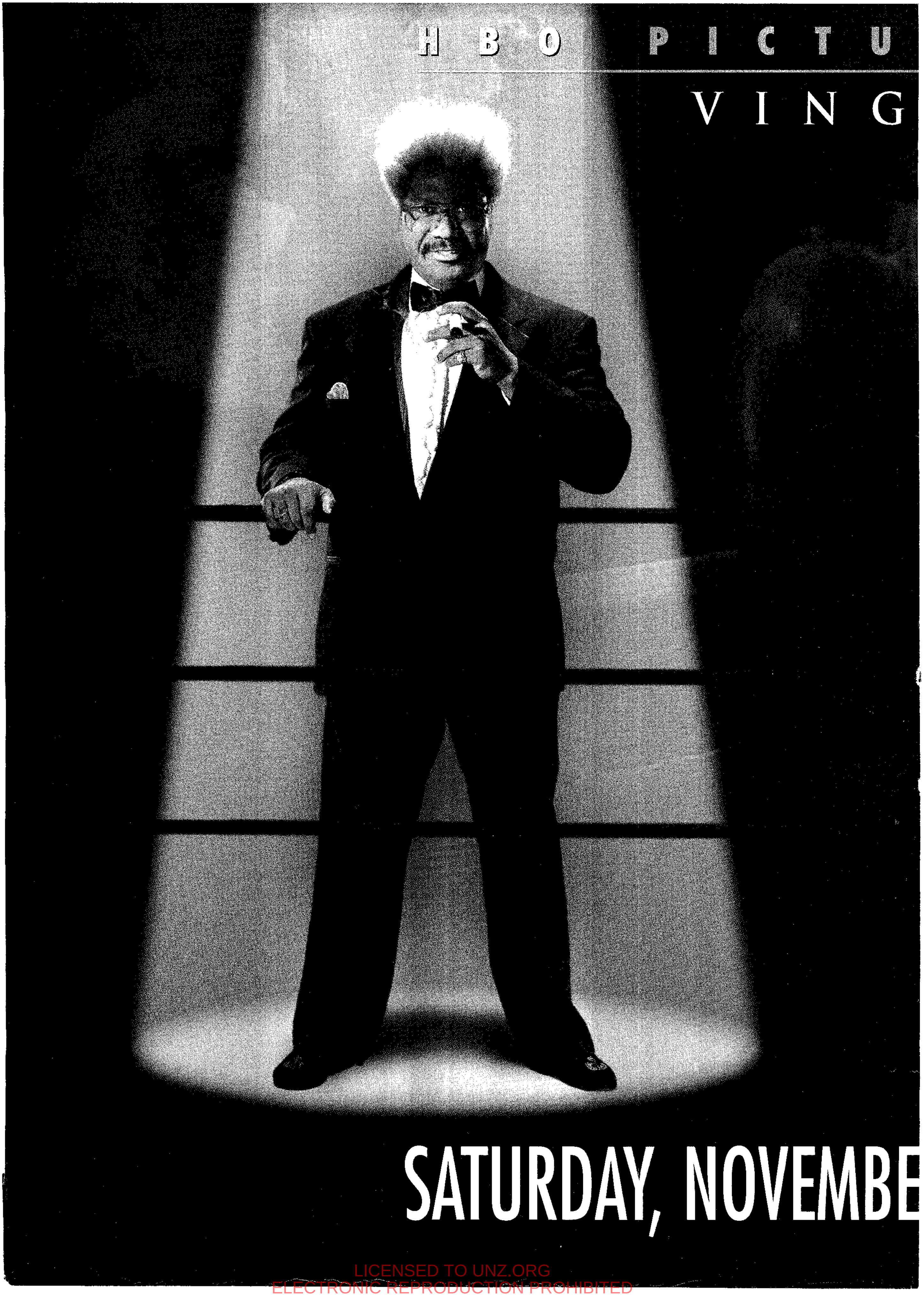
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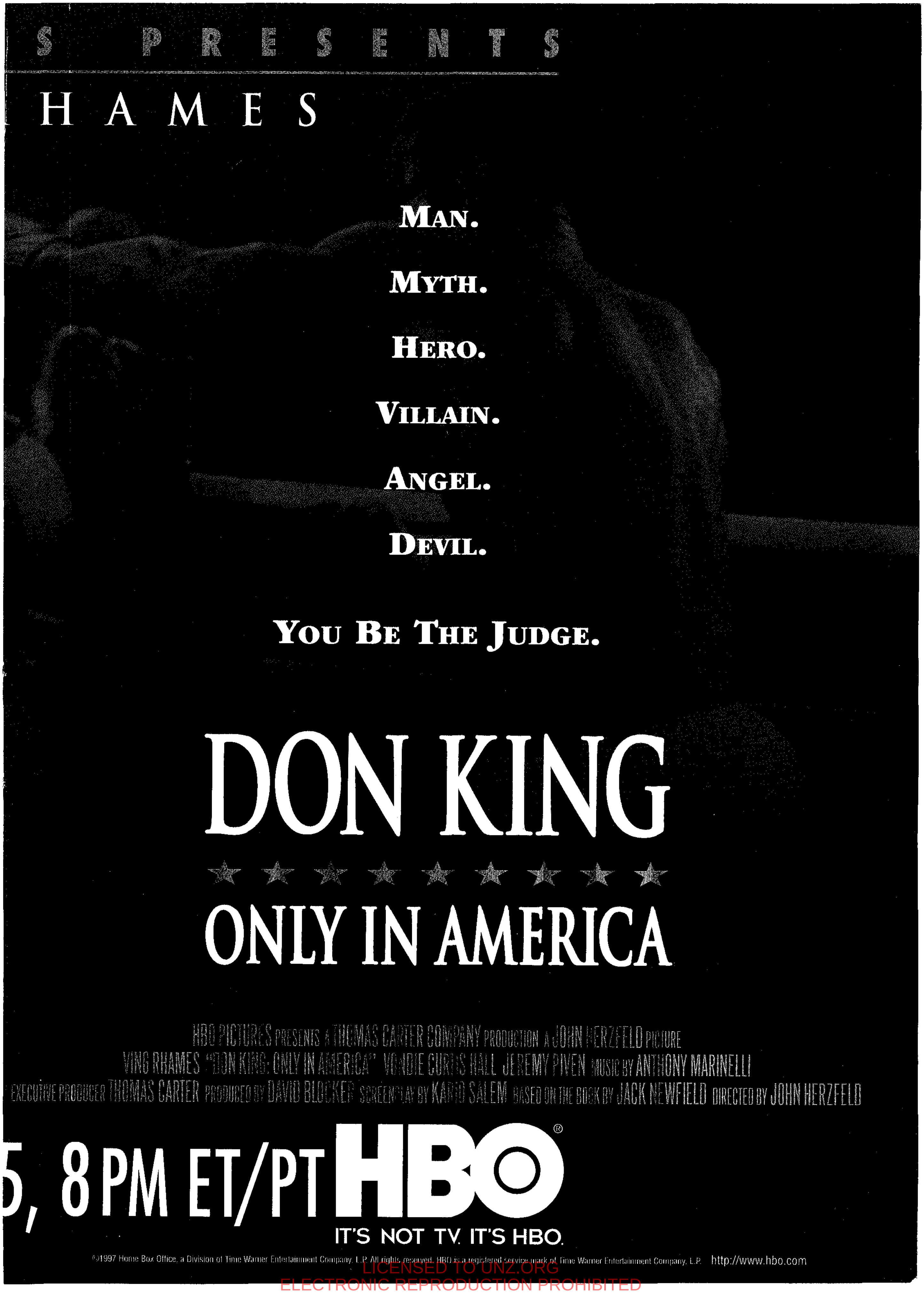

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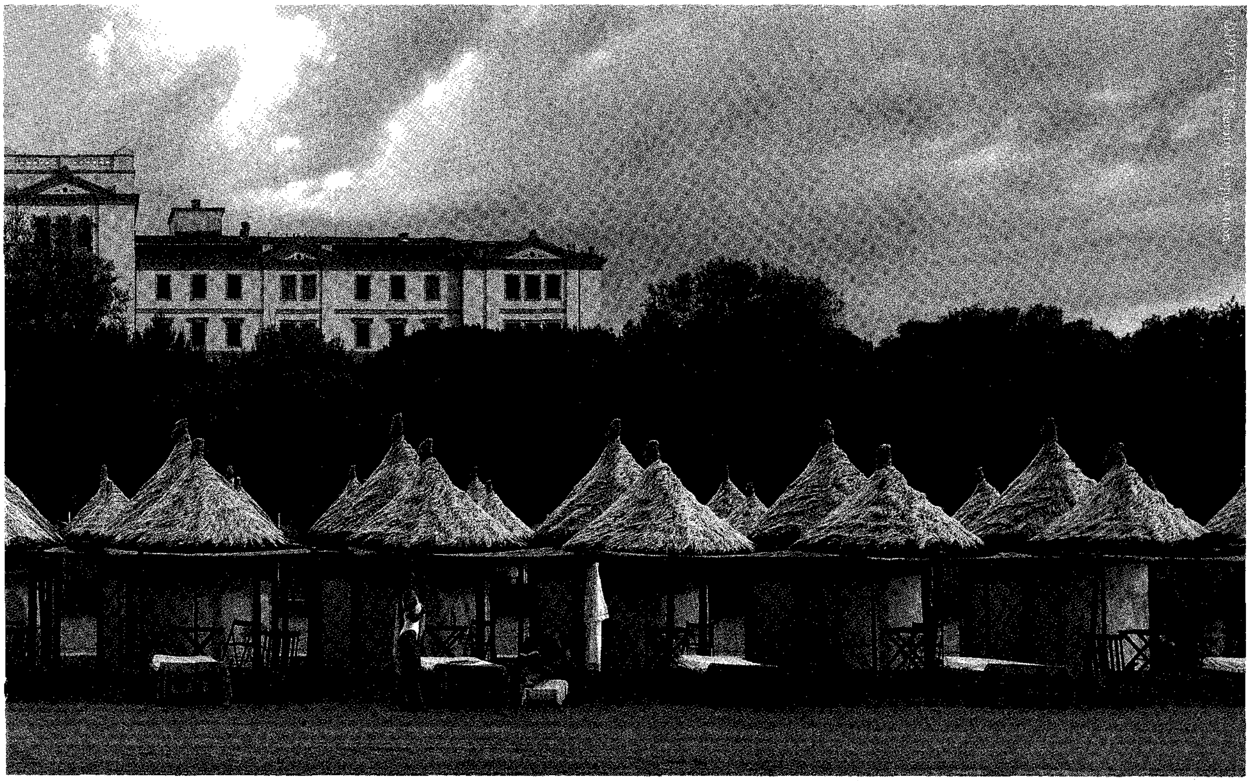

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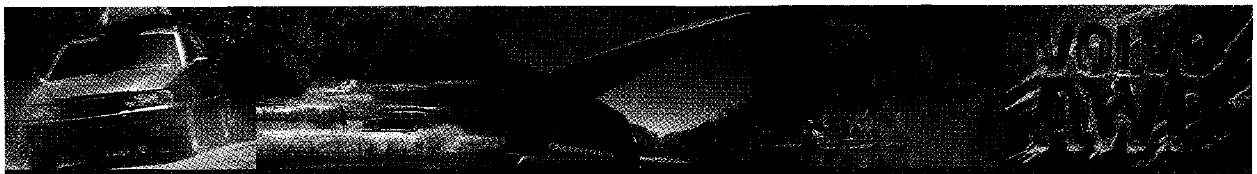

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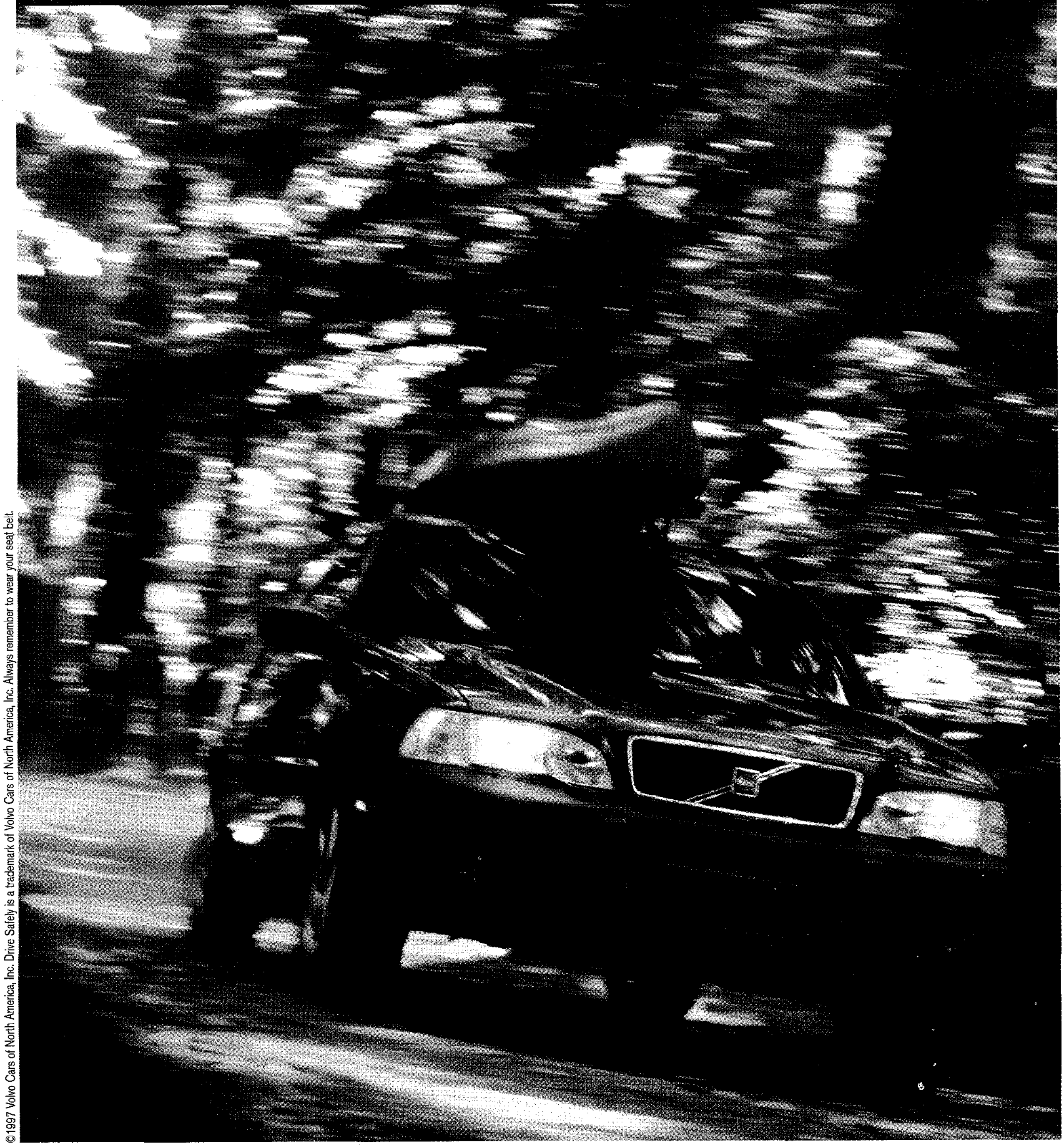

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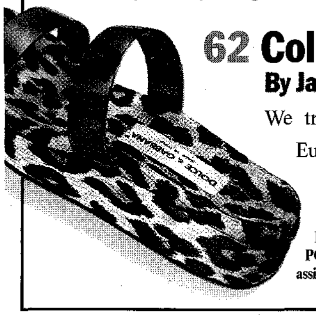

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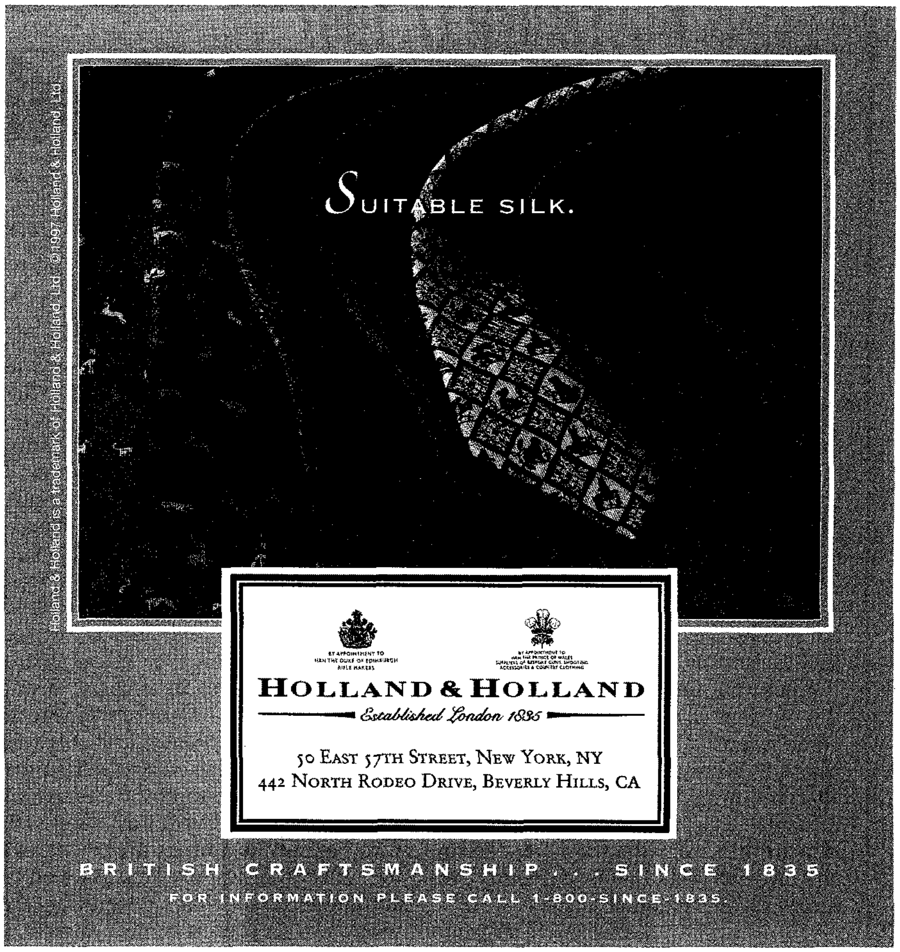
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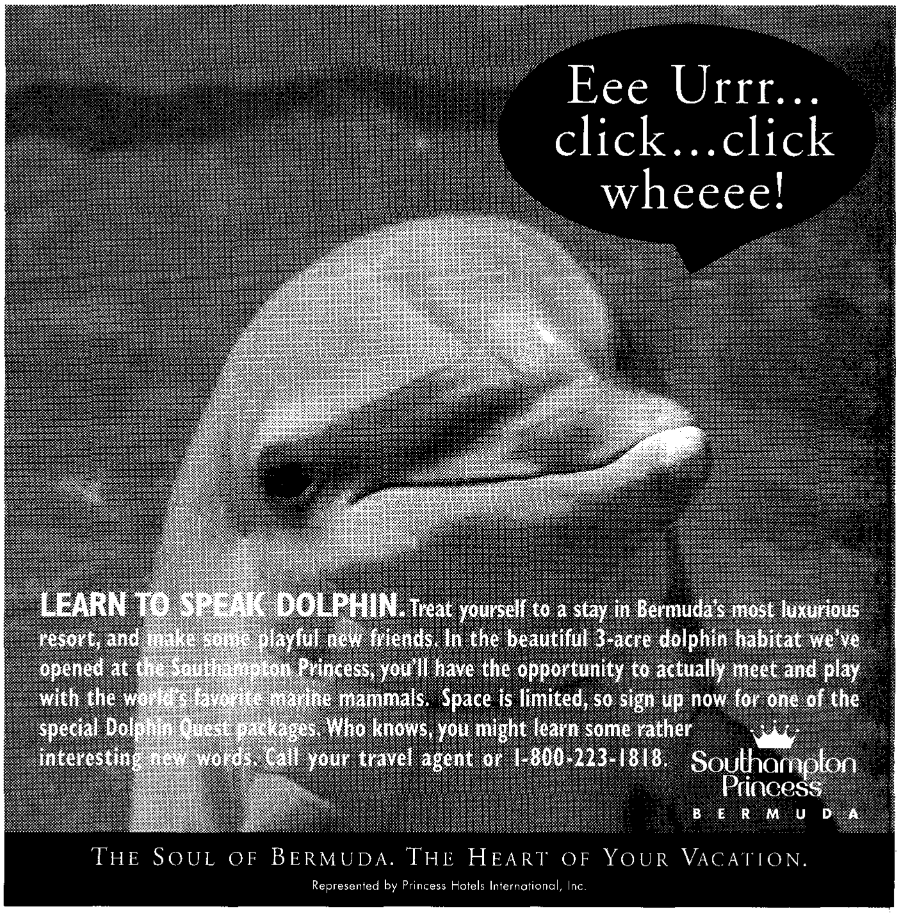
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LETTERS NOVEMBER 17, 1997

Prophet Center

Has a born-again Benjamin Chavis rewritten NAACP history? Harmony Korine—cineast or creep? Will New York accept more Angelenos?

ACCORDING TO PETER NOEL'S PROFILE "The Redemption of Benjamin Chavis" [October 20], "Minister Chavis is especially bitter about [Abraham] Foxman, who he claims tried to intimidate him into repudiating Farrakhan." I can state categorically that there was never any effort to intimidate him or anyone else. When Minister Chavis was head of the NAACP, he and I met to coordinate a strategy to combat problems of mutual concern, particularly racism and anti-Semitism.

Since Minister Chavis's departure from the organization, we have continued to enjoy a positive relationship with the NAACP. Minister Chavis has seen fit to chart his own course, one we criticize only insofar as it leads him to support and affiliate himself with the hate, racism, and anti-Semitism that is frequently promoted by the Nation of Islam.

Abraham H. Foxman
National Director
Anti-Defamation League
MANHATTAN

I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY, IN HIS CAMPAIGN for rehabilitation, Benjamin Chavis would want to characterize the NAACP board's (pre-scandal) dissatisfaction with his leadership as a sign of the board's cowardice, self-interest, and shortsightedness. I am less resolved about Peter Noel's uncritical readiness not merely to accept but to promote this particular reading of events. I suppose it never occurred to Noel that the board's problems with Chavis could have been a matter of principle.

The repositioning of Chavis's ideology as mainstream also provides cover for Noel's neutrality toward other nationalistically minded figures like Leonard Jeffries and Alton H. Maddox Jr., both of whom, along with Chavis, Noel now feels at liberty to describe as nothing more wayward than "controversial."

Nick Viorst
BROOKLYN

Film Frauds

IF YOU HAVE EVER WONDERED WHY WE Generation X'ers are bitter—Eddie Vedder bitter—you need to read Richard Regen's profile on Harmony Korine ["Dis Harmony," October 20], yet another tediously clichéd, reliably mediocre young'un, angry at, like, whatever, whose unhappy delusion it is that he is a filmmaker. The story, more than echoing the vapid protestations of someone who seems to be playing a joke on humanity and artists in general, illustrates the power struggle between my generation and you baby-boomers.

On one side, you have your garden-variety baby-boomer studio heads, long out of touch with whatever is considered cool, hanging on to their cushy (Establishment) jobs by the tips of their French manicures. In an attempt to justify their salaries, they have to occasionally spread their tentacles in search of a *phenomenon.* On the other side, a young artist who has seen legitimate art passed over for yet another Rambo flick plays on the ambitions of an older generation that would sell its soul to be near something or someone hip. It is hard not to laugh.

Blaine Sergew
ATLANTA, GA.

IT SADDENS ME TO SEE A PAID CRITIC DEmolish a film he so obviously did not understand—*Gummo* is quite intentionally not a "serious essay on social breakdown" ["Movies: Clawless," by David Denby, November 3]. Denby completely missed the beauty of the chair sequence (and thus probably many other scenes). The man doesn't "just destroy the damn chair"; it's a fight, and at certain points, the chair is winning. This fit of imagination is not a "meaningless 'cruel' vignette"; it is a splendid and convincing portrayal of characters making something out of very little.

I sensed zero intention on the part of Harmony Korine to "frighten us with brat nihilism." So the bodies are scrawny, their clothes ragged, their houses in shambles—those factors only make their lives and their stories that much more spectacular. There is a large unsatisfied audience of youths like myself who are tired of coherent stories and would rather see a rambling yarn about two kids hunting down cats than see a director ram "a particular social meaning" down our collective throat.

James Cox
MANHATTAN

"EAST OF EDEN" [BY CHRIS SMITH, OCTOber 6] was a good, swift kick in the ass. Why didn't you publish it in May? That's when I graduated from acting school in New York and could have used it to combat the draw of the West Coast. Now I'm looking for work that doesn't require me to be tall and blonde with big tits, crying in my empty (but spacious) Hollywood apartment and wilting—what's with all of this sun? Hollywood seems stale and void compared to the raw inspiration seeping from New York. I really wish that I hadn't fallen into the "I want to be a movie star" vacu-suck. As soon as my lease is up out here, I'll be back. I only hope that you can forgive me.

Dresden Shumaker
LOS ANGELES

CONGRATULATIONS ON DAVID DENBY'S astute and accurate review of *Boogie Nights* ["Movies: Rude Mechanicals," October 20]. As the person who created the adult-film business in 1968 with the first issue of *Screw,* I have found it peopled by mediocre clowns in search of a carnival. Hollow people and filled vaginas do not a life make. I found the film tedious, boring, and insipid—a total waste of time. Thankfully, when I saw the film in L.A., the projector broke after 85 minutes, and I got my money back. I guess God does smile on infidels. Great job, great review. Regards from the Erotic Combat Zone.

Al Goldstein
Publisher, Screw *Magazine*
MANHATTAN

Correction Contrary to what was reported in Mark Jacobson's November 10 article "Rudy's Oval Office Dream," David Garth did not manage Rudolph Giuliani's 1989 mayoral campaign. Garth in fact ran Giuliani's successful 1993 campaign. *New York* regrets the error.

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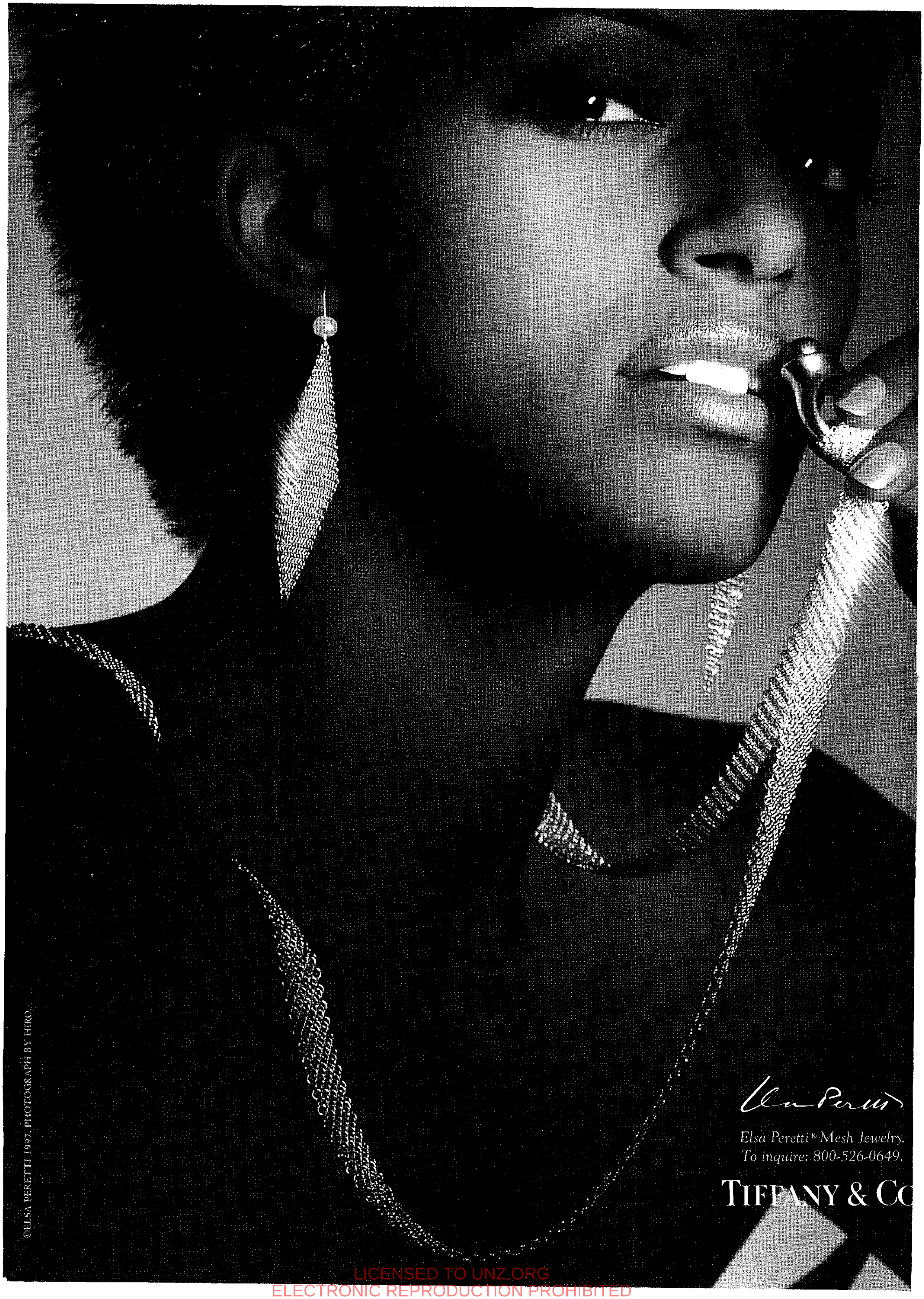

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INTELLIGENCER

DINKINS TAKES ON THE LIBERAL PARTY

It's no secret that **David Dinkins** has had it with New York State's Liberal Party. Now he's upping the ante. "I have no intention of any longer supporting anyone on the Liberal Party line," Dinkins told *New York*. "I have in the past, but I will no longer." Does that mean that Dinkins will not campaign for any of his longtime Democratic allies who also happen to accept an endorsement from the Liberal Party? "I don't think my allies of long standing are going to do that," Dinkins responds. "The Liberal Party is not liberal, with a small *l*. It just isn't, and I think it's high time that we pull the covers off." Responds Liberal Party head **Ray Harding,** "If that's the case, then you might ask David Dinkins why he sought the Liberal Party nomination in 1989, as well as in '93." Says Dinkins, "The answer to that is that we would have gotten it if we'd been willing to give away the store." This year, Dinkins refused to endorse Comptroller **Alan Hevesi** but supported **C. Virginia Fields,** although both ran on the Liberal as well as the Democratic tickets. Fields was on vacation and unable to discuss her future plans with the Liberal Party.

David Dinkins: Taking no liberalties

SWM, 59, DPL, INTERESTED IN HUNGARY

Even before he was formally named ambassador to Hungary, New York power lawyer **Peter Tufo** proved himself an adept diplomat. While testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on October 23, Tufo was asked whether he wanted to introduce any family members. "The children are in school today, in New York," he answered. "But I want to thank my family for their support and encouragement in this effort." He did not mention that his wife, **Francesca Stanfill,** who hadn't accompanied him to Washington, had filed for divorce in Manhattan the day before. The Tufos married in Southampton in 1983, and **Liz Smith** reported their separation in 1994, although they later reconciled. Stanfill, a *Women's Wear Daily* reporter turned novelist, went to Budapest to check out schools this summer, and friends report that she was studying up on Hungary. Now it seems that she and the two children will stay in New York while Tufo moves into the Budapest embassy; his ambassadorship was confirmed November 6. Neither Tufo nor Stanfill returned calls.

ROLL OVER, JAMES BEARD

Talk about power. **Linda McCartney** signed on for the annual women's power lunch, held on November 18 at the Rainbow Room and organized by Citymeals-on-Wheels, which provides food for the homebound elderly. She also agreed to bring her husband along (any man who attends must pay $10,000 for the privilege). But there was one condition. The longtime vegetarians would come only if the luncheon were meat- and fish-free. When told that there are always vegetarian meals available at the lunch, McCartney clarified her position: She meant the *entire* event. Ten days after the Rainbow Room's **Joe Baum,** who underwrites the event each year, cheerfully agreed to rise to the challenge, McCartney sent a letter explaining that she had a scheduling conflict. "However," she wrote, "since I am so pleased the meal has gone veggie, I would like to donate $10,000 toward Citymeals-on-Wheels, on the condition that the meals provided out of this donation are purely vegetarian." Citymeals executive director **Marcia Stein** is unfazed by the task. "With this money, we'll primarily target the Asian elderly, who are used to eating a lot of vegetables and tofu," she says.

MANY HAPPY RETURNS FOR RON

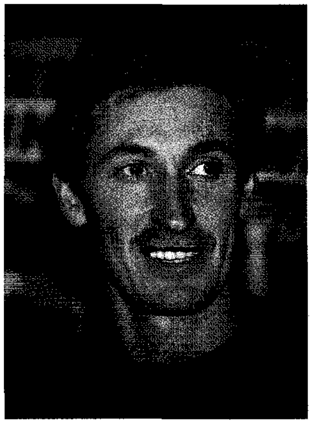
Ron Perelman is decidedly indecisive, and not just about women. According to a source, the makeup mogul habitually returns much of what he purchases. "In the past year and a half, in one department, the stuff has come back twelve to fifteen times," claims the Barneys source, who says that items, some worn and some as old as three years, are continually being brought in by Perelman's chauffeur. "He gives Revlon goodies to some of the salespeople," the source adds. These enticements are little Revlon shopping bags filled with nail polish, lipstick, and—the pièce de résistance—emery boards. A Perelman spokesperson denies that the Revlon CEO makes any unusual returns; and a Barneys spokesperson says the store considers Perelman a valued customer who adheres to their return policy.

Martha Stewart: Marital diss

MARTHA STEWART: DITCHED AT ALTAR

Catering queen **Martha Stewart** must have suffered the ultimate frustration. After years of preaching to her public the how-tos of wedding planning, the domestic perfectionist was forced to sit on her skillful hands while her 32-year-old only child, **Alexis,** invited just three guests to her wed-

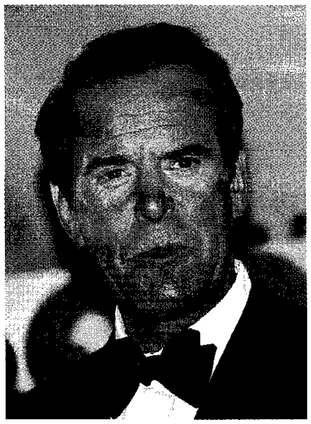
iotographs: clockwise from top right, Evan Agostini/Gamma-Liaison; Henry McGee/Globe Photos; Edie Baskin/Outline.



Wayne Gretzky:
League of their own

CHIPS OFF THE OLD ICE BLOCK

His team may not be in the running for the Stanley Cup, but this past Sunday, Gretzky managed to score the tying goal for the Rangers. **Ty Gretzky,** that is, who, along with his brother, **Trevor,** plays for Chelsea Piers' junior hockey league for 7- and 8-year-olds. Last week in the "Mites" division, as it's called, the Rangers played against the Sharks, with **Wayne Gretzky's** sons skating for the New York–named team. "They are treated like everyone else and not given any special privileges," says one observer. The one noticeable difference is that all the players, including the team's one girl, **Isabelle McNally** (Balthazar owner **Keith's** daughter), wear jerseys sporting their last names; but the Gretzkys, not wanting to skate on their fathers' coattails, wear shirts emblazoned with only their first names.



Peter Jennings:
Dinner out

Ingrid Casares:
Liquid assets

ding to lawyer **John Cuti.** "None of Martha's friends were invited, and the groom's parents didn't even come," says a Stewart insider. But, according to a Stewart friend, "for years, people have been asking Martha what she would do for her daughter's wedding. She would have loved to have a big event, but this is what Alexis wanted, so Martha was happy." Happy enough, apparently, to hand over a New York City apartment as a wedding gift. Cuti, who's one of **Richard Emery's** legal partners, has also gotten some high-profile work from his new mother-in-law: Sources say that he's now handling Stewart's bitter legal battle with her East Hampton neighbor **Harry Macklowe.** The case should be a gold mine: Almost a year ago, Stewart's then-attorney, **Leonard Ackerman,** estimated that her legal fees were already around $250,000.

MADONNA PAL OOZES CONFIDENCE

Fame-lovin' Miami party girl **Ingrid Casares** has finally found a home for Liquid. After months of false starts and speculation about locations, it looks as if the Cuban celeb-pet and her business partner **Chris Paciello** will open a branch of their Miami nightclub at 16 West 22nd Street early next spring. Meanwhile, the original Liquid, host to such notorious partyers as **Madonna, Liza Minnelli, Jack Nicholson,** and **Kate Moss,** will be holding its second-anniversary bash later this month—hosted by none other than Casares's most famous material friend. Casares hopes to enliven our urban nightlife scene because, she says, "the energy of the seventies and eighties dance clubs has been relegated to a memory in New York."

A SAVVY DAY; THE MOGUL WON'T PAY

THE PITT STOP: Even gurus need a good Rolodex, it turns out. HarperCollins wasn't going to give **Laura Day** a party for her new book, *Practical Intuition for Success,* according to an industry insider, who adds that the situation changed after this exchange. Day: "What if I can get **Brad Pitt** to come?" HarperCollins: "If you can do that, we'll book the St. Regis." Day says she was originally told that " 'book parties really aren't the fashion anymore,' " but perhaps her intuition told her otherwise. In the end, she says, "they didn't give me *too* hard a struggle." Pitt left the New Jersey set of *Meet Joe Black* early to make it to the party on time, and CAA agent **Kevin Huvane** flew in from L.A. "I do have good friends, I have to say," laughs the author. HarperCollins didn't return calls.

DOLLARS AND SENSE: Even gazillionaires have their limits. The man who gave almost $5.5 million this year to Beth Israel Medical Center—**Larry Phillips,** former head of Phillips–Van Heusen, who retired to Florida—didn't stay at the ritzy Waldorf-Astoria the night before the hospital's multi-million-dollar fund-raiser there. Why? When he called the Waldorf to book his room, the only one available was a suite that rented for $750 a night. Says Phillips, "[My] sense of values doesn't permit me, psychologically, to stay in a $750 room, under any circumstances. I'll be staying with a friend instead."

Additional reporting by Kate Coyne and Shana Ting Lipton.

THE WHITE HOUSE'S PETER PRINCIPLE

Was it "strictly an 'oversight' " that kept **Peter Jennings** off the list for the White House's recent dinner for Chinese president **Jiang Zemin**? That's what the Washington *Post* reported, but a Beltway insider suggests that the White House was "being polite" by putting out that line. "Each network gets one star; that's always been the way it is," explains the source, who adds that it makes sense that ABC's invitee was **Diane Sawyer,** who went on Richard Nixon's historic visit to China in 1972. NBC's **Tom Brokaw** and CBS's **Dan Rather** were both at the dinner, along with the owners of all three networks—creating a public embarrassment for Jennings in the competitive world of network news. But his press rep, **Arnot Walker,** insists that he isn't upset at all. "Peter looked at it from the standpoint that you usually get one state dinner per administration," explains Walker. Jennings was the only anchor invited to the Clintons' first state dinner. And, according to a White House source, Jennings was the only anchor who made it onto the list for British prime minister **Tony Blair's** dinner scheduled for next year.

Photographs: clockwise from top left, Walter Weissman/Globe Photos; Gregory Pace/Sygma; Thomas Lau/Outlin

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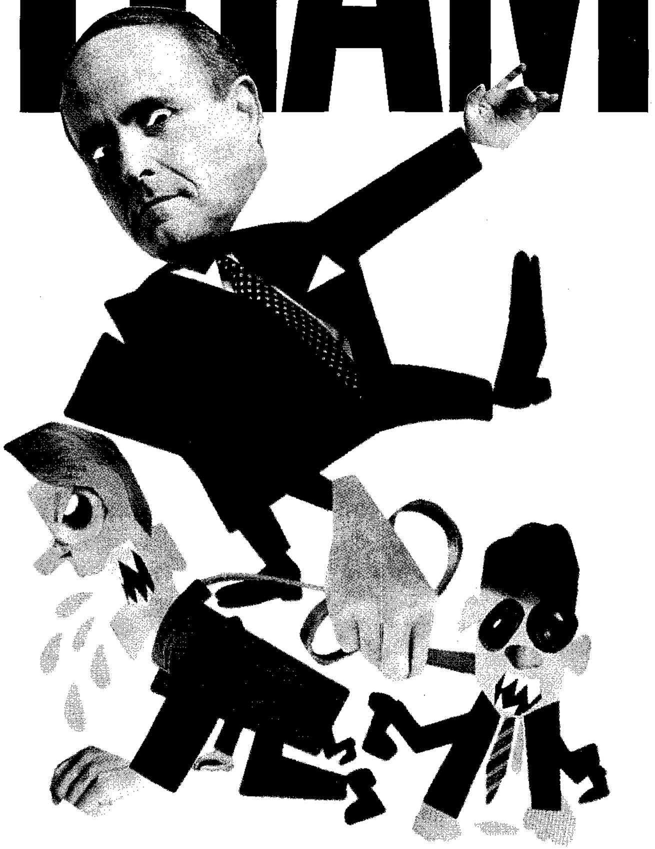
GOTHAM

Full Court Press

Giuliani's penchant for ruling by lawsuit.

A MERE FIVE DAYS BEFORE last week's election, in the middle of an unusually hectic week, Rudy Giuliani took time out to announce he was filing yet another lawsuit. The City Council had overturned his veto on a bill regarding the outer boroughs' "dollar vans" and was imposing a yearlong moratorium on new licenses. Rudy saw that as an abuse of legislative power, and, with the help of his corporation counsel, Paul Crotty (who just last week announced his resignation), asked the State Supreme Court to make the council back off. Meanwhile, his staff was already talking about the *next* lawsuit the City Council could expect should it try, once again, to force legislation calling for an independent police-review board.

Over the course of his first term, Giuliani filed three such jurisdictional lawsuits—two against the City Council, one against the comptroller—and was the defendant in three more, including one from Public Advocate Mark Green and one from Ruth Messinger. And those are just the local suits. He also sued (or threatened to sue) the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (over the World Trade Center's low property-tax assessment), the tobacco industry (seeking billions in damages for the financial burden of smoking-related illnesses), the auto-insurance industry (claiming it was making excessive profits off New York City residents), and the federal government (three times: once over illegal aliens' Fifth Amendment rights, once over legal immigrants' right to receive food stamps, and once over the president's recent line-item veto).



"He certainly wins some sort of record for being the most litigious mayor in recent history," says Chris Meyer, the executive

(continued on page 18)

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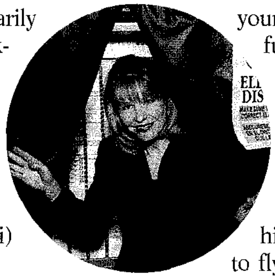
CAMEO

The Lady Vanishes

REPORTERS AT MAYOR GIULIANI'S ELECTION Night victory party at the Hilton passed time, as they customarily do, playing the podium-pecking-order game. But conversation soon turned to who *wasn't* there: the woman whose name the mayor pronounces as if she were one of Santa's reindeer. Not that he's even pronounced it lately, of course. Donna (Hanover Giuliani) was nowhere to be found.



Election Night absences are one thing. But what happens when Inauguration Day comes? Who holds the Bible? Who stares admiringly into the incumbent's eyes? What will we see of young Andrew, now presumably too full of racing preteen hormones to scamper around Dad's legs during the address? Whom might the mayor squire around? There's lots of guessing about his lust—for the White House, that is—and how it will affect his politics in his second term. But if he continues to fly solo, the speculation won't stop there. Mayors need tenderness. And presidential candidates need spouses.

tration by Stephen Kroninger. Photograph by Steven Hirsch/Sygma.

Giuliani *continued from page 17*

director of NYPIRG, an independent government-monitoring group.

"I don't think the actual number of lawsuits we've filed has increased in the period since Giuliani took over," says Lorna Goodman, the senior assistant on the affirmative-litigation unit of the city's Law Department. "But certainly, a lot more of the ideas for lawsuits are coming from City Hall rather than agency heads, as they did under the Dinkins administration."

Not only has Giuliani himself originated an unusually large number of these suits, but he has used them more strategically than did his predecessors—especially in the case of the ongoing battle over the City Charter.

"The revision of the City Charter made very significant power changes in city government," says Ross Sandler, a New York Law School professor and *City Law*'s editor. "What Giuliani has been doing is attempting to define the mayoralty as strongly as can be supported by the City Charter."

"Of course the mayor has the right to sue to defend his turf," says Ed Koch, whose administration was a frequent target of advocacy groups' lawsuits. "We did that type of thing all the time when I was mayor. But for him to sue about the line-item veto is ridiculous. He's got one of his own"—it's more like a watered-down version of the presidential veto, actually— "and what I really object to is that he is hiding behind [the city's lawyers] on the freedom-of-information requests filed by other city officials."

Koch isn't the first to complain that the Law Department, which is supposed to represent all city officials, spends too much time doing the mayor's bidding. "We had to fight just for the right to sue," says Andrew G. Celli Jr., who represented Mark Green when he sought police-brutality records. "Not only did Crotty not represent Green—he tried to say he didn't even have a right to sue." One former corporation-counsel employee, who asked to remain nameless, said, "When I worked there, the office actually tried to *mediate* disputes between the mayor and other heads of the city. Now the more the mayor sues, the more that office is seen as the mayor's attack dogs."

Speaking of Crotty last week at the press conference where he announced his resignation to take a job as a senior vice-president of Bell Atlantic, the mayor actually sounded sentimental. "Paul has been the best corporation counsel the city has ever had," he said fondly. The two men have been friends since they clerked for the same judge 30 years ago. Giuliani hasn't chosen a replacement, but he clearly views it as one of his most important appointments: "In the sense that New York City has turned itself around, none of that could have happened without Crotty's defense . . . and his initiation of litigation."

NORMAN VANAMEE

Brewmaster De George, right, and Cajun-cooking fan Harris, middle.

CULINARY ARTS

The Lobster Bowl

The best pre-football feast in New York.

IN COOKING, AS IN OTHER fields, great artists stand out anywhere—even in the parking lot at Giants Stadium. That's where Bob Harris and John De George can be found before every single home game. Harris is the chef, De George the brewer, and together they rank as the tailgating champions of the Meadowlands.

Harris, a 38-year-old Staten Island plumber who considers himself a disciple of Paul Prudhomme, first got into the high art of tailgating with an oyster gumbo he cooked up for a Dallas game in 1985. "We were very crude then," he says. "We used a plumbing torch to heat up the gumbo." Now he cooks up a different dish for every game. The week before last, it was an elaborate lobster feast, with five dozen littleneck clams, eight pounds of mussels, potatoes, onions, corn on the cob, and eight mighty crustaceans fresh from New York harbor, all cooked in a broth spiked with beer and mustard.

To complement the lobster, De George, a 36-year-old Staten Islander who works for Prudential, brought along a home-brewed Belgian-style wit beer made with unmalted barley and a touch of cilantro. "In warmer-weather games, we do light styles like wit beer and pilsners," De George explains, "and as the year begins to progress, we get into warming styles like stouts."

The culinary fireworks do interfere with the football games. "We haven't seen an opening kickoff in fifteen years," admits Harris. But they remain die-hard Giants fans. "When they won the playoff game against the Redskins in '86, forget it, it was crazy," says De George. "I don't want to say it brought tears to my eyes, because I'm not that kind of guy, but, you know." Harris has fond memories of that game, too. "I made chicken gumbo," he says. "I remember exactly—I was still using the plumbing torch."

PETER KAMINSKY

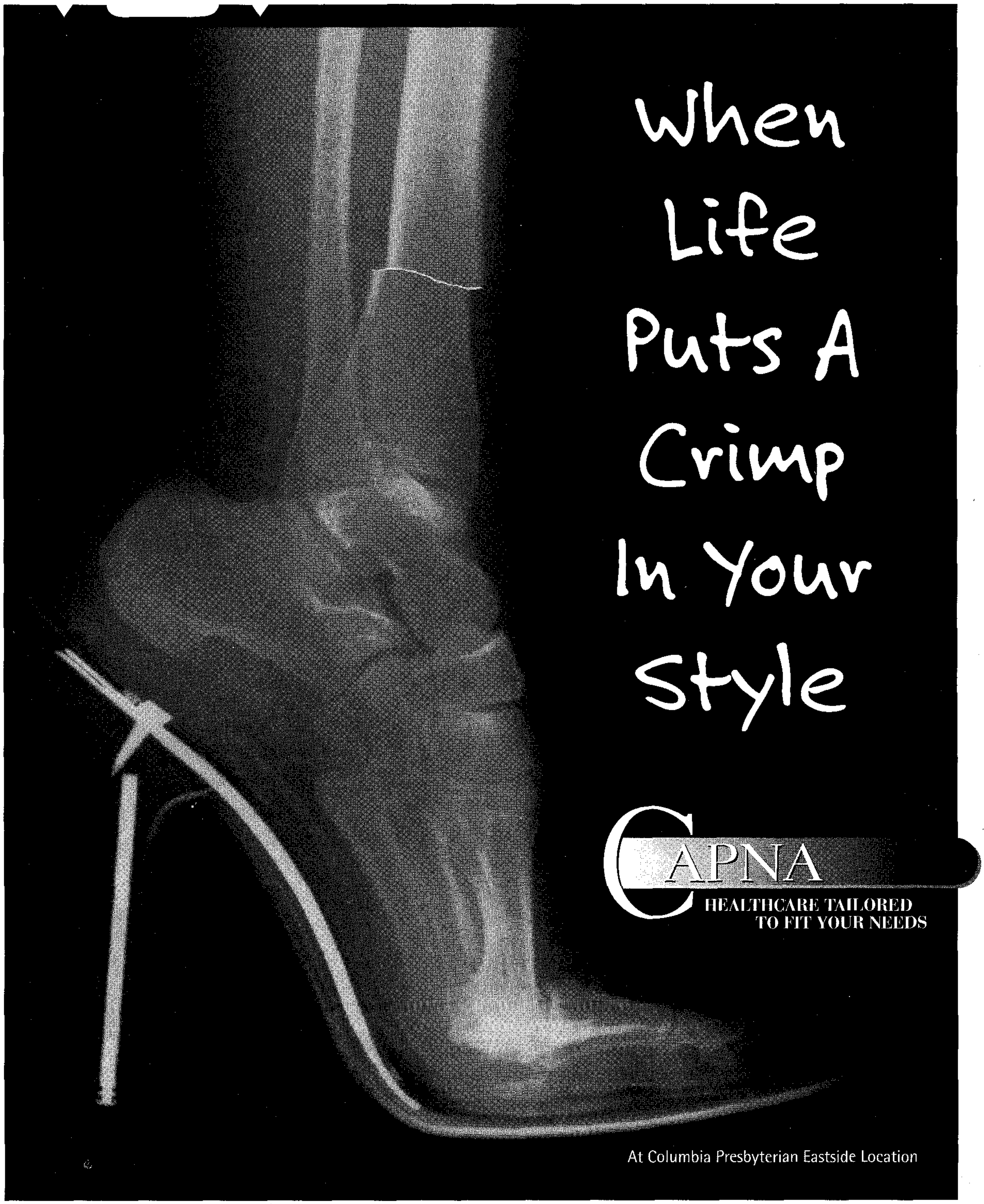
RATINGS

How Le Cirque Ended Up in the Soup

THE 1998 ZAGAT RESTAURANT SURVEY HITS the streets this week, and it confirms all our suspicions about eighties revivalism: The rich are eating out in record numbers, and they're paying through the nose. After years of stagnation, the average price of a meal at the city's twenty most expensive restaurants has risen by 6.5 percent. Two establishments—Nadaman Hakubai and Cellar in the Sky—shattered the heretofore-inviolate $80-per-meal price barrier. "It's a very good time to be in the restaurant business," says Tim Zagat, the survey's publisher.

Still, one elite restaurant takes its lumps. Despite years of high ratings, Le Cirque 2000 fell out of the survey's top 25. Adding insult to injury, Soup Kitchen International—operated by the notoriously grouchy Al Yeganeh (left)—made its Zagat debut with a stunning 27 (out of 30) food rating, two points higher than Le Cirque. Yeganeh's service score was, less surprisingly, a lowly 8. The soup chef, true to form, scorns the findings: "If you ask my real customers, not just idiot people who watch *Seinfeld*, they say it's the best on the planet. We live in New York City—it's fast-paced!"

Photographs: top, courtesy of Viking Penguin; bottom, Evy Mages/New York *Daily News*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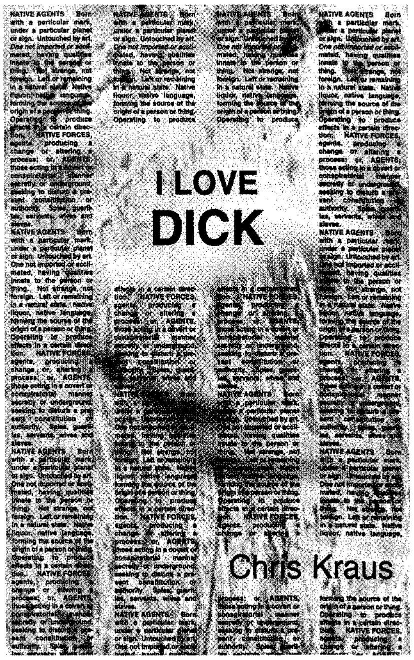
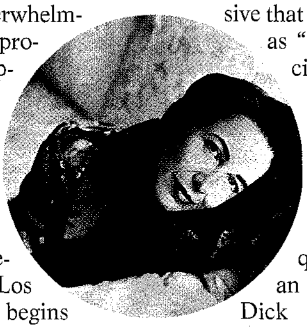
PUBLISHING

SEE DICK SUE

A very phallic novel gets a rise out of a beloved professor.

CALL YOUR BOOK *I LOVE Dick,* and you can expect to attract publicity—far more publicity than a tiny publishing house like Semiotext(e), known for jargon-peppered academic volumes, is used to. But this first literary effort by Chris Kraus, an alternative filmmaker who is also a fiction editor at Semiotext(e), got the wrong kind of attention. Her confessional roman à clef about the mossy realm of academe and the glossy SoHo-Chelsea art scene nearly landed her in court.





The novel, set primarily in New York and Southern California, tells of an overwhelming attraction its protagonist, who happens also to be named Chris Kraus, has for a fellow called Dick, "an English cultural critic who's recently relocated . . . to Los Angeles." What begins as a harmless crush develops, at the encouragement of her husband (who, like the author's husband, is a Columbia French professor and Semiotext(e) editor named Sylvère Lotringer), into something more. Soon the protagonist is writing a stream of fawning love letters so intrusive that what she refers to as "abstract romanticism" seems more like epistolary stalking.

Boilerplate legal disclaimers notwithstanding, the "Dick" in question sounds an awful lot like Dick Hebdige, the ruggedly handsome British-born author of such books as *Subculture: The Meaning of Style,* who not so long ago joined the faculty at CalArts, just outside L.A.

Hebdige is quite well acquainted with the real-life Kraus and Lotringer, who actually sent him the letters now gathered in the book. He hasn't taken too kindly to its publication, nor to its portrayal of ethical lapses he is perceived to have had (including excessive drinking and womanizing). "I don't like reading bad reviews," he says, "and this book was like a bad review of my presence in the world." He initiated legal action; Kraus responded by dropping the character's last name and placing him at a different school. Dismissing the project as "beneath contempt," Hebdige says that "if someone's writing gets read only because it exploits a recognizable figure, then it really is a despicable exercise"—a surprisingly earnest complaint coming from a semiotician of popular culture. Kraus takes an entirely different view of the matter, explaining that "the whole book is about how to make privacy a feminist issue"—though such concerns apparently don't preclude a big party for the book, to be held later this week at Andrea Rosen Gallery.

"A feminist issue?" Hebdige scoffs. "Tell her to take it up with Princess Diana." NIC ZEMBLA

NICE JEWISH BOY SEEKS HOT-BLOODED JEWISH GIRL FOR LOVE IN COLDER CLIMES PART III

● ANOTHER TOUGH WEEK for Jay Ramras, the Alaskan restaurateur scouring New York for a wife to bring back to Fairbanks. The *Love Boat* devotee turned out to think Alaska was just north of Maine. A weekend date had a beautiful figure, "but it's more about looking lovingly into her face," sighs Jay, "and she had a very leathery face." Meanwhile, he's honing his sales technique.

THE PRACTICE SESSION: To help him deal with "the Alaska problem," Cathy—Jay's romantic adviser—is taking him on a practice date. She'll play the role of Jay; he'll play Jay's date. "He needs to have comebacks," says Cathy, "It's all about marketing."

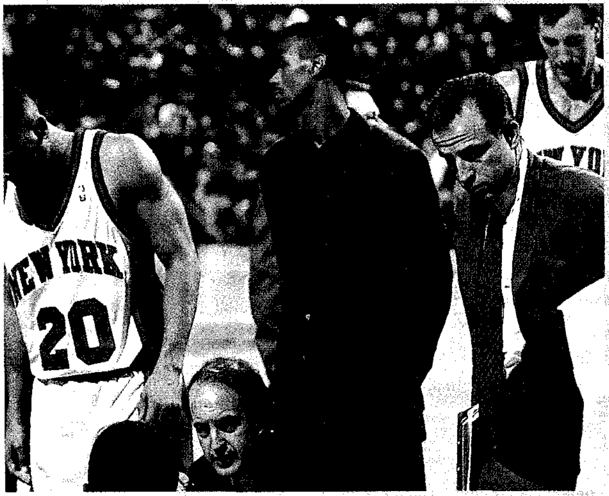
THE PROSPECT: A futures trader has been his favorite so far. "She says, 'I can't live in Alaska. Why don't you quit your job, I'll quit mine, and we'll live somewhere in the middle.' "

SPORTS

The Role Player

WITH AN HOUR TO GO UNTIL THE KNICKS TAKE THE FLOOR against the Celtics, Pastor Bob Love is leading a small chapel service. Only two Knicks have shown up—Charlie Ward and Ronnie Grandison. For Ward, this is a chance, perhaps, to thank God for making him a starter. For Grandison it's an opportunity to reflect on what it means to be the team's thirteenth man in a league of twelve-man rosters. "Basketball is not just a physical sport," Grandison says later. "There's a spiritual side."

Spiritual is as good a word as any to describe Grandison's role on the team. The Knicks have kept the 33-year-old journeyman power forward in their orbit for the past three years via short-term contracts and teasing stints on the active roster. In that time, he's seen action in a total of eight games. Now, officially, he's on injured reserve with a bum ankle. IR keeps him in a suit rather than suited up—a purely aesthetic distinction—but Grandison keeps the faith. "The Bible teaches that everyone is equal and everyone has a role to play," he says with equanimity. BRIAN FARNHAM



The Knicks' thirteenth man, veteran forward Ron Grandison.

Photographs: center, Sherri Breyer; bottom, George Kalinsky/Major League Graphics.

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DON'T YOU HATE THE TERM *Generation X*? It's so broad, encompassing so many people—not just ambitious free-spending twentysomethings, either; it also includes those damned slackers—that it's hardly any use at all to retailers looking to tailor their pitches to the right social niche. Fortunately, help has arrived in the form of *The Emerging Affluent Report*. Separating the demographic wheat from the chaff, the people behind this new newsletter—which is geared toward market-research professionals—have bestowed a more specific (though not necessarily more meaningful) name on young consumers who "like to spend money on themselves."

They call them "EAs." Trying to put a face on the initials, Allison Hemming, the newsletter's editor, unleashes a string of sound bites. "Audrey Hepburn in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*. People who are buying VWs today but BMWs tomorrow. No marriage, no mortgage. Post-college, pre-obligation. I'm an EA."

The way she tosses around the term, it's clear she's hoping it'll become as much of a stock term as *baby-boomers* or *flower children*. That won't be easy, but Drew Massey, the publication's founder, believes it has the credentials to pull it off. "We are considered experts in this marketplace," he explains. "We coined the term."

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P.O.V.
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The P.O.V. 100: From Sex to Search Engines, the Most Essential Sites in Cyberspace
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HOW TO WIN AT THE TRACK
FREE LOVE 90S-STYLE
Plus: Fashion's Up-and-Comers, Classic Cocktails, Beating Parking Tickets, Five Tips on Buying Art, and more!
Ashley Judd on Passion

Well, originally the term was coined by *P.O.V.*, the three-year-old men's style magazine, but the boundary is easy to blur: Massey is *P.O.V.*'s founder, and Hemming is its marketing director.

Though that magazine purports to speak to precisely the young consumers that *The Emerging Affluent Report* purports to dissect for advertisers' edification, Hemming bristles at the suggestion of a conflict of interest. "This is a totally separate vehicle," she insists. "It's not evident that it's from *P.O.V.*"

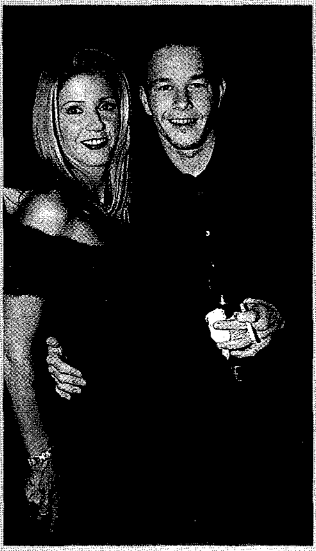
The *Report*'s premiere issue—two sides of a tri-fold card—presents market research on EA consumer habits and a report on Boston's dangerous yuppie frontier, South End. ("When it comes to gentrification, crime and opportunity go hand in hand," says Hemming.) Future issues promise a look at "Generation Y—the next group of EAs" and "EAs throughout the decades." KATE COYNE

THE SCENE

Diamond in the Buff

Text by Vanessa Grigoriadis
Photographs by Patrick McMullan

"TREASURES ARE NOT ONLY in the sea but underneath us all," said Manolo during his recent fashion show. "We walk over them always without our eyes." If his point was unclear—a nautical koan? A meditation on life's beauty? And what's this about walking with one's eyes?—his heavily accented English wasn't to blame. He was doing something that, in the midst of Fashion Week's hype, seemed near-revolutionary: He was being understated. He even arrayed his dresses, quietly, in the audience's seats and invited his guests to parade along the catwalk instead. It was a good shtick, but not all the strollers adopted his low-key style. Former Warhol creation Monique Van Vooren was loudly trumpeting the arrival of her much younger boy toy. "Have you met my new find?" she cooed. "Let's put him in the movie of my life," cried the merry widow Grace Robbins. "He can play one of my lovers."


Candace Bushnell and Mark Wahlberg at the opening of Bulgari's Fifth Avenue store.

At Elaine's, Heather Watts and Jock Soto celebrate the publication of their new book, *Our Meals*.

At Manolo's spring fashion show, the designer and Monique Van Vooren.

Kathleen Turner at the Princess Grace Awards gala, held at the Waldorf-Astoria.

At the Marc Jacobs show, Duran Duran's Nick Rhodes.

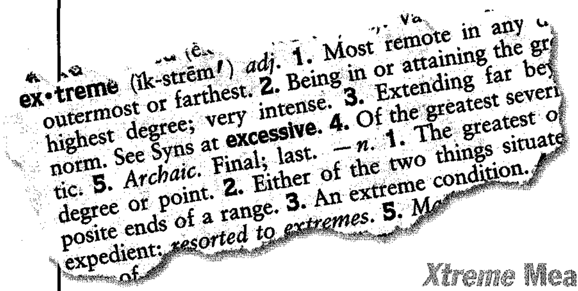
Paige Powell and Francesco and Alba Clemente at Stephen Sprouse's fashion show.

GOTHAMSTYLE

EDITED BY DANY LEVY

Back in the Saddle

It's all well and good to buy boot-cut trousers, to wear polyester shirts open to the waist, and to play that funky music, white boy, but if you're serious about your seventies revivalism, you have to take the good along with the bad. And now, as the revival drags on (will it last longer than the decade itself?), we find ourselves wading back into—oh, no, avert your eyes—Cowboy Chic. At his recent Paris shows, Alexander McQueen dressed Ester in a tasseled halter dress and western boots (not to mention the full Wella Balsam 'do), and Valentino paraded Stella in fringed leather galore. Meanwhile, at Madison Avenue's venerable Billy Martin, they can hardly keep the $1,750 Stallion horn-back alligator boots in stock. How long till Miu Miu brings out sequined Daisy Duke shorts?



ex•treme (ĭk-strēm′) *adj.* **1.** Most remote in any
outermost or farthest. **2.** Being in or attaining the gr
highest degree; very intense. **3.** Extending far be
norm. See Syns at **excessive. 4.** Of the greatest sever
tic. **5.** *Archaic.* Final; last. —*n.* **1.** The greatest o
degree or point. **2.** Either of the two things situate
posite ends of a range. **3.** An extreme condition.
expedient: *resorted to extremes.* **5.** M
of

Xtreme Measures

Maybe there was a time when *extreme* summoned images of people living life *to the max,* being out there on the edge, doing stuff that their awestruck buddies might later refer to, hoisting a brewski, as *totally raw, dude.* Today it summons, as much as anything, the image of marketing consultants trying to make their product seem somehow rugged. With the recent release of some supposedly "extreme" scents aimed at well-heeled sophisticates, the word's meaning, if any, is now officially up for grabs. A few current coinages: 1. Polo Extreme Sport fragrance 2. Bulgari Eau Parfumée Extréme 3. Izod's Extreme Leisure 4. Extreme Beans 5. Extreme Tea 6. Extreme Mega Brite chalk 7. Extreme Wheelchair seat cushions 8. Wells's Blue Bunny Extremes ice cream.

You Can't Touch This

This week's obscure object of desire:

WHAT: François Nars's Jungle Red nail polish

WHERE: Available only at Barneys

WHY: The shockingly ordinary shade is said to have been inspired by *The Women,* the 1939 bitchfest starring Joan Crawford. After relentless advance press and heavy play on the Paris runways, it's available, though just barely, to the public: The first shipment of 457 units sold out in nineteen hours flat. The second shipment is selling at the rate of 33 units an hour, so get yours quick—the film's remake, starring Julia Roberts, is in the works.

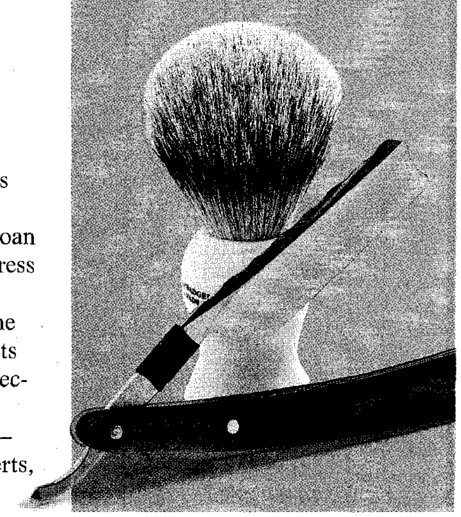
BODY TYPE

Here Comes the Groom

Given the ongoing fetishization of traditional manly pursuits, it's no surprise that shaving should be elevated to a self-expressive ritual. Consider the Art of Shaving, which has opened two stores in the city in the past year. At its midtown location, Boris Mirzakandov, a 49-year-old Uzbekistan native, serves as shave master. For $30, he'll apply hot towels to your face, massage it with aromatic oils, remove your stubble with a straight razor, and finish with cold towels and moisturizer. "Boris is an artist," boasts proprietor Eric Malka. "He is so gentle, you don't even feel the blade on your skin."

If the thought of strangers wielding straight razors makes you queasy, do-it-yourself shaving products are also booming. The Art of Shaving sells a huge array of upscale accoutrements (a large beaver-hair shaving brush fetches $280), and this month, Phyto-Lierc, which previously produced only high-end hair care for women, introduced a grooming line called Phyto Men. As it is, men are so eager to enrich their shaving experience that they've taken an unexpected interest in e, a line of feminine shaving products that features creamy foams in almond, citrus, and floral scents (carried at Barneys and the Art of Shaving). "They seem to like the way the stuff smells," says a Barneys salesperson.

BETH LANDMAN KEIL



Photographs: clockwise from top, Dan Lecca; Steve Freeman; Photo

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THEY SAY

GENTLEMEN

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COMEBACK

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12

WELCOME TO CIVILIZATION

THE CITY POLITIC MICHAEL TOMASKY

On the Rebound

While Rudy triumphant promised to bring more minorities into the fold, Democrats are hoping to bring more, well, anybody into the fold.

IT’S A GOOD THING THE ELECTION HAPPENED when it did, because it was beginning to look like some wires were singeing inside the mayoral neuro-circuits. The 50-hour marathon with which Rudy Giuliani closed out Campaign ’97 clearly left the man a little addled, so that by Election Night he was jumping for the cameras like a *Hard Day’s Night*–era Beatle (except . . . not) and giving a speech of Castro-like proportions. By the time I arrived at the Hilton victory party, so many hundreds were already heading down the escalators to the ballroom level that I assumed I’d enter the room to see overtime-happy workmen folding up the stage risers. Instead, there at the podium stood Hizzoner, by now touched with a Clintonesque scratch in his voice, still motoring away (and he talked for twenty minutes or so after that).

Rudy Giuliani’s success among minority voters improved slightly in his second campaign, but not enough.

Photograph by Liz Gilbert/Sygma

Without begrudging the man his right to be giddy, we can say that it’s hardly as if he were celebrating something unexpected in this spiritless campaign. A man who keeps his central promise and cuts serious crime nearly in half wins re-election. End of story. Poor Ruth Messinger, who did her best to locate issues on which the incumbent might be susceptible, and who comported herself with impressive dignity during the campaign’s closing days under circumstances that would have left most of us crouched under the box spring all day, discovered that her lectures and remonstrations were not of interest to a city such as Rudy’s New York, aglow in the soothing colors of confidence, order, and renunciation of guilt.

But: Maybe Giuliani learned something from this campaign. The talk that so consumed the papers in the race’s final days—and that probably cost Giuliani a couple of points—about his career direction after Gracie Mansion set off debate within the mayor’s inner circle, which David Firestone captured well in last Wednesday’s *Times*. Some advisers, their gazes fixed on Washington, want the mayor to tack to the right, the better to bring the nomination of his party for the presidency into the realm of the conceivable. Others argued for a wiggle to the left, bearing in mind that the man is governing a city in which four out of five blacks and nearly three out of five Latinos voted against him. These numbers were improvements over his 1993 totals among the two groups but a tad lower than Team Giuliani was hoping for, and they still bespeak a city in which brotherly love has yet to take full command of the hearts of men.

On the early evidence, the latter side is winning. In the coherent segments of his victory speech, the mayor apologized (that’s twice in less than a month!) for failing to deliver the great renaissance to every doorstep. “We have to do a better job to include all of you,” he rasped. The day after the voting, he underscored the point by paying a visit to the southeast-Queens empire of Floyd Flake, one of his prominent black supporters, and by telling the press that for the breadth of his victory he was indebted to minority voters.

One of the fundamental rules of politics is that you take care of your voters first. A city councilman who represents a mostly white-ethnic outer-borough neighborhood smiled as he said to me last week, “Thank God this election’s finally over. I mean, there’s not an intersection left in my district to hang another traffic light.” One doubts that Bed-Stuy, or Flake’s Queens turf, got quite that kind of treatment. Maybe now those neighborhoods will.

Don’t tell the gorgeous-mosaic crowd I said this, but . . . is it possible that Rudy Giuliani, of all people, can be the man whom history will anoint as the unifier? It seems a stretch. There will be fights—over the schools, the city-university system, welfare, and the cops—that will have their racial aspect, and he will tack rightward on this issue or that. But in saying so publicly that he owes his margin to minority voters, he is obligated, to some extent, to behave as though they are part of his constituency (if it hadn’t devolved into such a room-temperature cliché, I’d invoke Nixon and China here). It’s just words right now, but remember that we’re talking about a man for whom words mean little and actions a lot, as he himself has professed. So we will judge him by his own standard.

A FEW HOURS AFTER GIULIANI LEFT FLAKE’S company, about 150 Democrats gath-

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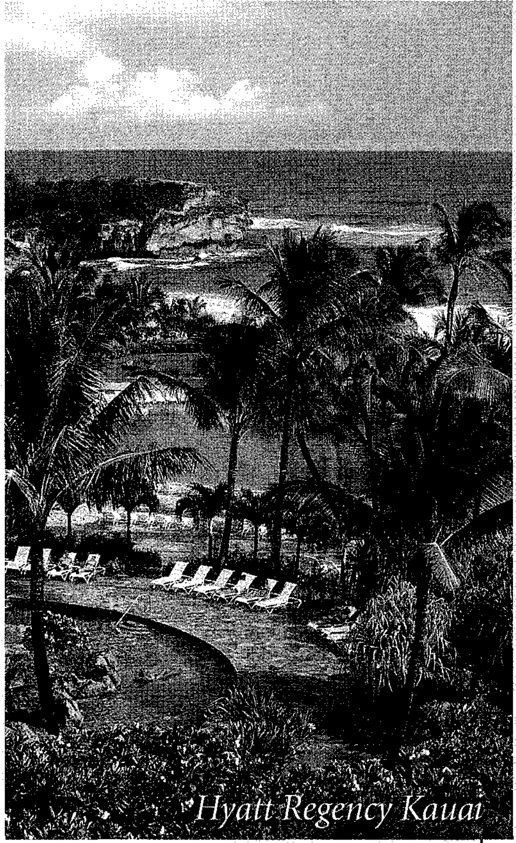
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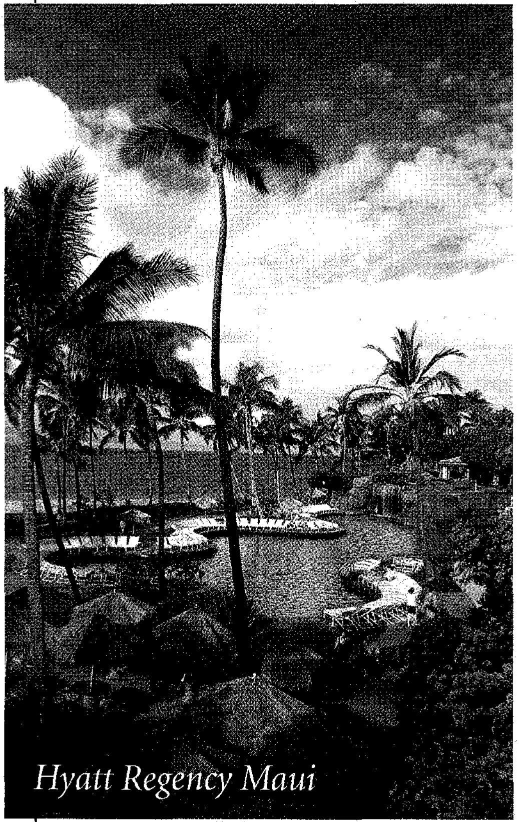
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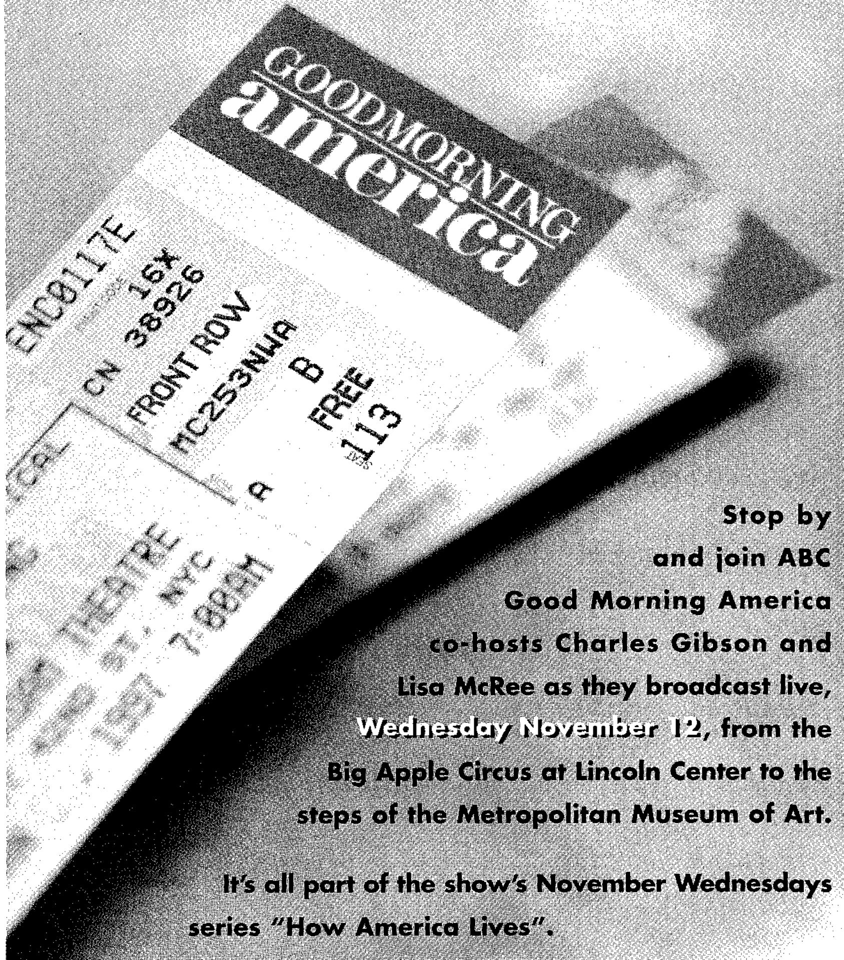

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GOOD MORNING america

Can't make it? Tune-in M-F, 7-9 A.M.

ered on the Upper West Side, where district leader Jerry Goldfeder invited the faithful to listen to Bronx borough president Fernando Ferrer talk about—go ahead; guess—the future of the Democratic Party.

The first sign of health was that the mood was light: "Why do we still believe in the party?" Ferrer asked, pausing for effect. "That was a rhetorical question." He went on to deliver a lesson you would never have heard in such a room four years ago. In trying to answer conservative sallies against this organ of government or that piece of social policy, Ferrer said, we have let ourselves, time and time again, be put in the position of defending an indefensible status quo—defending things that clearly weren't working very well.

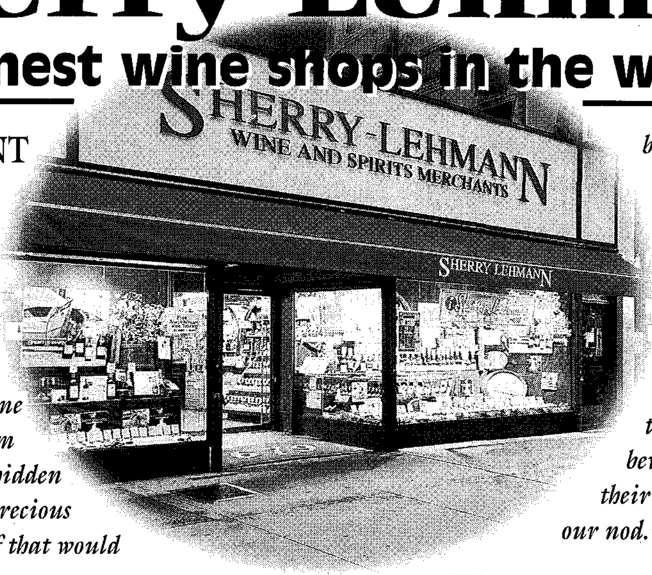
Democrats, he asserted, "can't be allergic to crime and quality-of-life" concerns. He talked about how agencies whose work Democrats believe in could best be supported by making sure taxpayers get their money's worth out of them. He even suggested, ever so gingerly, that in light of the ongoing debate about the value of a degree from a CUNY school, liberals might want to revisit their reflexive defense of open admissions. "If we continue to get sucked into those kinds of arguments," he said, "we're going to be completely marginalized."

All this went down a bit like a parent making the kids finish their peas, but surely everyone in the room had to admit that Ferrer was right as rain. Pollsters call it moving to the center, and die-hard old-school progressives call it caving in to the right, but it's neither. Does anyone believe that if CUNY operated according to stringent standards and the city's Health & Hospitals Corporation were a model of efficiency, those entities would be open to the kinds of attacks they've been facing? The best way to save them is to change them.

New York Democrats are starting to get this, especially the younger folk. Which poses another problem: The party's younger officials—and Ferrer, at 48, is by my reckoning toward the sunset end of this spectrum—have to assert themselves. With Messinger's defeat, a whole generation whose thinking has dominated New York liberalism for nearly 30 years is leaving with her. How much longer do people like Charlie Rangel and David Dinkins, who looked so small and bitter on Election Night, think they can call the shots? Many Manhattan members of the State Assembly have been there for twenty years or more. The torch needs passing, while there's any flicker left in it. ▬

Sherry-Lehmann

"One of the finest wine shops in the world" – Zagat Survey



BEST WINE MERCHANT

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THE BOTTOM LINE LARRY BLACK

Sell Division

Since 1981, the bankers at Dillon Read have fattened up on more turnovers than Pillsbury. Talk about dough, boy.

IT'S STARTING TO LOOK AS IF THE world will soon be dominated by a dozen banking behemoths, providing everything from high-tech derivatives to car loans and corner ATMs. And those hoping to survive natural selection have been consolidating like crazy.

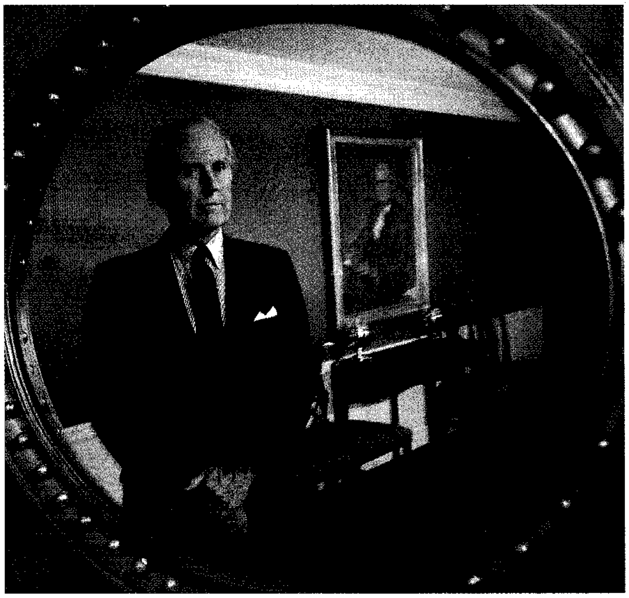
Wall Street's last independent houses are being snaffled up for top dollar, making their owners—often the firms' senior managers—even more fabulously wealthy than before. This year's frantic round of mergers has claimed not only well-known names like Salomon Brothers and Dean Witter but also smaller specialty firms—"boutiques" like Robertson Stephens, Montgomery Securities, Furman Selz, and Alex. Brown.

One recent seller stands out. For the better part of this century, Dillon, Read & Co. was one of four white-shoe securities firms dominating the Street. Treasury secretaries Nicholas Brady and C. Douglas Dillon, and the country's first Defense secretary, James Forrestal, were all Dillon Read alumni. Perhaps what's most remarkable about its takeover by the Swiss Bank Corporation this past summer is that it's the sixth time in a decade and a half that Dillon Read has changed hands, making its partners very, very rich. Repeatedly.

Three times since 1981, when the Dillon family sold out to the Bechtel construction group for $25 million, through its recent sale to Swiss Bank Corp for $600 million, Dillon's managing directors have bought the firm back from outsiders at bargain-basement prices, only to sell to new investors at a healthy premium. As a force on Wall Street, Dillon may have failed to keep pace with Morgan Stanley and First Boston. But none can rival it for giving its shareholders a return on their equity.

All this with little fanfare. Privately held Dillon has never divulged just how well it has done.

THE MAN WHO CHOREOGRAPHED THIS REmarkable series of flips is its now-retired chairman, John Birkelund. Birkelund was brought in soon after Bechtel bought the firm in 1981, to help Brady. A venture capitalist who had made a name for himself taking public hot new companies like Federal Express and Tandem Computers, Birkelund ran New Court Securities, a money-management firm established by Britain's Rothschilds, for 21 years until he was fired. "He forgot who owned the firm," says one colleague. A forceful personality—even friends describe his sizable ego—Birkelund was 50 and, says the colleague, "he had something to prove."


Opportunity knocks . . . and knocks . . . and knocks: Retired Dillon Read chairman John Birkelund always knew how to seize the day.

By the time Birkelund took over as president, Dillon Read—one of the "special bracket" firms that had controlled corporate underwriting right up through the seventies, the bank that had created conglomerates like Chrysler and Goodyear Tire and financed the Civil War, the construction of the IRT, and the Triborough Bridge—was in big trouble. The immediate cause was heavy trading losses sustained in the late seventies. But Dillon Read had been in a slow decline for years. Under Brady, a consummate "relationship" investment banker who shunned lesser parts of the business like selling and trading stock, Dillon had been overtaken by the likes of Merrill Lynch, Goldman Sachs, and Salomon Brothers.

Birkelund set about limiting Dillon's exposure to major risk while sharpening the stodgy firm's entrepreneurial edge. But within two years of his arrival, Bechtel was making noises about selling Dillon. Birkelund saw a chance for Dillon's partners, with a 20 percent stake in the firm, to gain control. They anted up some $17 million of their own (borrowed) money in March 1983 to buy back half of Bechtel's holdings, paying book value. In February 1986, Dillon bought back Bechtel's remaining stake for another $25 million, paid for out of the firm's capital.

Within six months, Dillon sold itself again, to the giant Travelers Group Inc. Some partners felt betrayed. To sell control after having just regained it "would seem silly," Birkelund conceded at the time, "but it's not." Certainly not with a sale price of $157.5 million, or 2.8 times Dillon's book value. And the deal had extras: a $20 million pool to be paid out to bankers who stayed on for three years, and an understanding that Dillon would operate autonomously. After the bills were paid, Dillon's 35 partners divided more than $100 million.

A similar opportunity presented itself in 1991, when Wall Street had fallen on hard times and the Travelers Group suffered heavy losses. Fearing Travelers would try to sell Dillon to a rival, Birkelund quietly approached potential friendly investors in Japan and Europe. Some partners favored a merger with S.G. Warburg, then still an independent UK bank. But Birkelund settled on Warburg rival

Photograph by Reuven Kopitchinsk

Barings, which was prepared to accept a minority stake in Dillon and pay handsomely for it—$78 million, though only $26 million of that would go toward a voting stake in the firm. To buy their 60 percent stake, the Dillon partners paid only $39 million—much of it in the form of deferred pay owed them by Travelers.

"Birkelund was planning his exit strategy carefully," says a London banker who followed the negotiations. "When he bought from Travelers, he fully intended to resell the firm five to seven years later. Barings was part of that plan."

The buyout was presented to Travelers as a done deal, with an implied threat: Travelers would sell them back their company at book value, $117 million, or it "would be left with nothing but a lease on a building and a few machines," one partner says. "There was a little panic, but in the end they agreed."

Then Dillon got lucky. In January 1995, Barings self-destructed over rogue trader Nick Leeson's infamous billion-dollar trading loss. Overnight, Barings had a new parent, the Dutch bank ING.

Again, Birkelund saw opportunity. Wall Street was humming; rivals were interested in firms like Dillon Read. Arguing that the succession amounted to a change of control under the terms of the 1991 deal, Birkelund demanded that ING sell. The Dutch reluctantly agreed to sell back 15 percent of their 40 percent holding—at book value, for $30.8 million—and granted the Dillon partners an option to buy the rest by June 30, 1997. The move was pivotal; had ING held on to the full 40 percent, it would have been difficult for Dillon's partners to negotiate with anyone else.

Last March, with ING pressing to buy the firm, Birkelund—now Dillon chairman, having passed the chief executive title to Fritz Hobbs the year before—did just that, calling Tom Wyman, the former CBS chief executive who had run Warburg's U.S. operation, to see if Swiss Bank might be interested in Dillon.

SBC chief executive Marcel Ospel flew to New York; the deal was wrapped up within several weeks. Meanwhile, Dillon had continued talking to ING, which had agreed to Birkelund's price of $600 million but was insisting that Hobbs step aside. The Swiss, anxious to get the deal done, were happy to name Hobbs head of global investment banking. Birkelund was thus able to protect Hobbs (who was essentially having his firm sold out from under him) and present the SBC sale to the rest of the management committee—David Niemiec and François de Saint

(continued on page 128)

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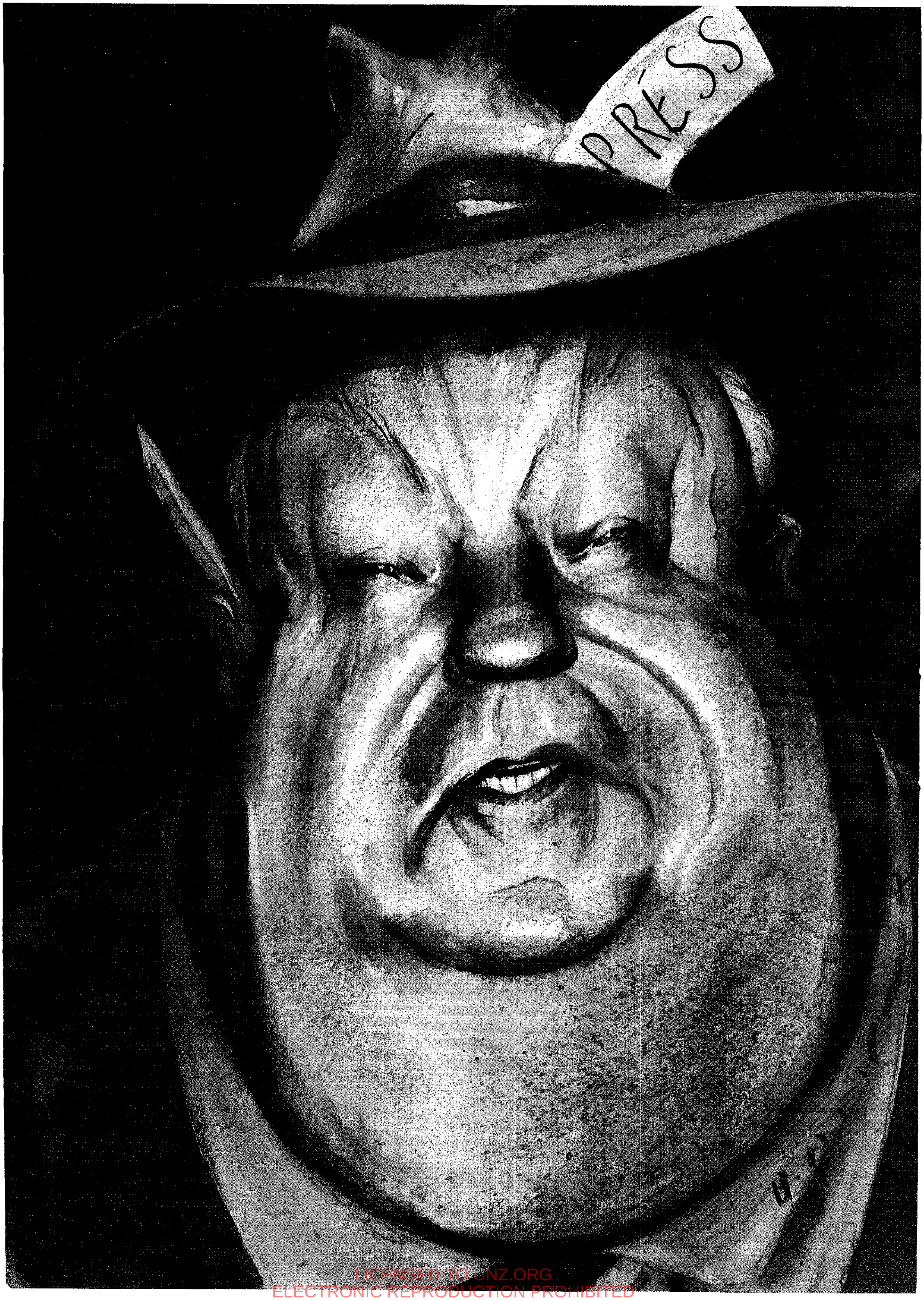

PRESS

Roger Ailes is mad as hell

When he worked for Bush and Reagan, his contempt for newsmen knew no bounds. Now he's creating Murdoch's Fox News in his own fierce, vindictive, liberal-hating image.

BY DAVID BROCK

ILLUSTRATION BY STEVE BRODNER

UNDER A HUGE WHITE TENT PITCHED ACROSS WEST 48th Street, just outside the Fox News Channel's gleaming street-front studios, about 400 of the city's political and media elite gathered on October 29 to celebrate the New York debut of the newest entry in the 24-hour-cable-news wars, the latest frontier in Rupert Murdoch's immense media-and-entertainment empire. After a bruising battle with the city's biggest cable operator, Time Warner, and a $400 million infusion from Murdoch's News Corporation, Fox had finally unveiled its marquee lineup of Brit Hume and Catherine Crier here just a month before. As Martha Stewart, Geraldo Rivera, and Connie Chung nibbled on hors d'oeuvre from Balducci's and sipped "New York martinis" passed by white-gloved butlers, all eyes were on the highly animated, tanklike figure who dominated the festivities that evening—Roger Ailes, the former GOP pit-bull political consultant who has reinvented himself as the hard-charging chairman of Fox News.

Rupert Murdoch—whose conglomerate Ailes once derided as "a bunch of drunk Australians"—delivered a warm toast to his top news executive and then introduced a videotaped salute from Mayor Rudy Giuliani, an Ailes pal and former client who was busy across town debating Ruth Messinger. For a rare moment, Ailes, an insomniac and self-described paranoid, looked almost serene.

FOX AND THE HOUND **Ailes (right) with Rupert Murdoch on the way to announce Ailes's hiring as chairman of Fox News Network. He just signed a new, three-year contract.**

But in a bit of symbolism that no one could miss, the klieg lights set up to beam the Fox News Channel logo into the sky were aimed not at the 45-story News Corp. building *behind* the tent but across Sixth Avenue at 30 Rockefeller Center, the headquarters of NBC, which owns Fox's arch-rival, MSNBC, and whose employ Ailes left last year after a nasty falling-out.

THOUGH THE NEW ROGER AILES IS WEARing a press badge, if one pokes around a bit, the old Roger Ailes, the man who retired as the Dark Prince of right-wing attack politics, is still lurking, doing what he does—or thinks he does—best: *spinning*. The difference is that now he's his own client.

He may be embarking on the most ambitious chapter in his ambitious career, but Ailes, 57, doesn't want to talk about it. In recent weeks, he insists, he's "turned down Tina" at *The New Yorker* and put off *Vanity Fair*. And *New York* is not a favored venue. Unable to resist poking his bald pate in the doorway as I interviewed his flack at Fox, Ailes said that *no one* gets good press from *New York*. He paused, his deep-set eyes came alive, and he boomed before disappearing: "Except Ruth Messinger!"

Over the next few weeks, Ailes shifted into campaign mode, practicing the kind of guerrilla warfare he perfected in his 30 years as a political operative. Suspicious that a colleague was talking to me, Ailes telephoned him and yelled, "You better spend a week back-spinning this." Over at NBC, senior management quickly clammed up following calls from Ailes's tough-talking lawyer. "I'm frightened right now," said a former Fox employee, noting the vast array of powerful connections Ailes maintains throughout the political and media worlds. "I've been told that if Ailes figures out I talked to you, he'll hunt me down and kill me."

Negotiating the ground rules for an off-the-record meeting, Ailes came on like an Edward G. Robinson character in a B movie. "Three people in the world hate me," he blustered. "You're not going to get to them, and everyone else is too scared. . . . Take your best shot at me, and I'll have the rest of my life to go after you."

IT'S STRANGE BEHAVIOR FROM A NEWSMAN, the kind of posturing that, from the moment Ailes shaved his beard and plunged into the TV-news business four years ago as head of CNBC, scared news professionals both inside and outside the network. How, they wondered, could a man who'd spent three decades tutoring GOP politicians like Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, George Bush, Al D'Amato, and Rudy Giuliani on how to manipulate the press, who called Bill Clinton a "hippie president" and bashed reporters like CBS's Dan Rather and CNN's Bernard Shaw as liberal stooges, credibly reinvent himself as a newsman ?

"There was a time in television when that would have been unthinkable," says Washington *Post* media reporter Howard Kurtz. "What would Roger Ailes say if James Carville was anointed president of CBS News?"

But Roger Ailes is a newsman with a pronounced disdain for newsmen, and Fox News is being promoted as an anti-network, a news channel designed to appeal to people—from disaffected Gen-Xers to Limbaugh's dittoheads—who don't trust the Big Three news divisions. "Roger sees the networks as genuinely left-wing and full of rotten people," says Ailes's friend John LeBoutillier, the former Long Island GOP congressman and author of *Harvard Hates America*. The channel's catchy ad campaign, "Trial by Jury, Not by Media," shows a giant news microphone in the shape of a noose. "Ailes was always doing polls on the media," says former Fox producer Emily Rooney. "He wants to tap into that anger, the shouting-at-your-TV types."

But as Ailes struggles to build a news division from scratch at a network most viewers identify with football, *The Simpsons*, and *The X-Files*, he seems torn between his old calling, manipulating public opinion, and the purpose of a news chan-

Photograph by Richard Drew/AP/Wide World.

nel, objectively reporting the news.

When Time Warner refused to carry the new Fox Channel in New York, Ailes—who was a strategist for Giuliani's mayoral bid in 1989 and remains a close friend—sprang into action. As soon as Time Warner announced that "they were screwing us," says one senior Fox executive, "Rupert called Roger, and within an hour and a half, Roger was having pizza at Gracie Mansion."

Giuliani gamely intervened on Ailes's behalf, pledging to broadcast Fox on one of the city-owned public-interest cable channels. Though a court eventually nixed that plan, support from City Hall bolstered Fox's position in the battle.

Ailes showed his appreciation: While presiding over the news organization, a senior Fox staff member says, he regularly dispensed political advice to the mayor's re-election campaign this year. (A spokesman for Giuliani declined to comment. Ailes says he is not "advising" Giuliani but acknowledges that he is in regular contact with him.)

MR. SPIN **As George Bush's media adviser, Ailes helped the VP dispel the "wimp factor"; he later helped run Bush's brutal 1988 presidential campaign against Michael Dukakis.**

ULTIMATELY, AILES WILL NEED more than fierce political skills to get his fledgling network off the ground. Murdoch, an outspoken conservative who loathes Ted Turner, has long dreamed of having his own news network, a rival to CNN. But Fox, in its present incarnation, poses scant competition. Many of its anchors and reporters are rookies, while veteran journalists are jumping ship. Its prime-time cable lineup is seen in an average of only 24,000 homes nationwide—enough, perhaps, to fill a basketball arena. (By contrast, MSNBC reaches 99,000 households; CNN, 788,000.)

Still, no one is prepared to write off Ailes's ambitious experiment just yet. "There's something in Roger's makeup," says one former NBC colleague, "that makes him outwork everyone else and win." Even his friends note his consuming, sometimes destructive drive. "He has some demons haunting him," says Chris Matthews, whom Ailes hired to host a talk show at CNBC. "He's very angry, like a twister."

GROWING UP IN THE SMALL FACTORY TOWN of Warren, Ohio, Roger Ailes learned to fight early on. A frail child who suffered from hemophilia, he returned home from school one day bloodied and beaten after a playground brawl. Ailes's father, a foreman at an Ohio factory, "took him aside and told him, *That can never happen again,*" says Jon Kraushar, Ailes's longtime partner in political consulting. It was the only time in Ailes's life that he saw his father cry. At Ohio University, Ailes enrolled in Air Force ROTC with aspirations of becoming a fighter pilot. He scored well on a preliminary exam, but the authorities discovered his medical condition and disqualified him.

A disappointed Ailes turned to his second love, theater. A talented actor, he performed in a variety of dramatic productions on campus and earned a degree in fine arts, paying his way by working as a radio disc jockey. He ended up as a prop boy on *The Mike Douglas Show,* then based in Cleveland. By the time he was 25, he had risen to executive producer.

It was on the *Douglas* set in the mid-sixties that Ailes met Richard Nixon, by then a widely reviled loser attempting a last-ditch political comeback. Nixon's resentment of the cultural elite resonated with Ailes, as it would bind him years later to Rupert Murdoch. Ailes never forgot the stories his father told of being talked down to by corporate executives at the plant, and in hitching himself to Nixon he saw the possibility of reversing the power equation. Nixon—convinced the press was out to get him in order to avenge Alger Hiss and worried that he could never get elected in the age of television—was intrigued by Ailes's facility with the medium.

The allure of politics made Ailes the only known person to leave his wife, a college sweetheart who stayed behind in Cleveland, for Richard Nixon. The race was chronicled in Joe McGinniss's classic *The Selling of the President 1968,* which accused Nixon's men of using TV to package a false image of a warm and fuzzy candidate, "like a car or a can of peas."

The book put Ailes on the map in the world of political consultants, but back in Ohio, his mother, who had raised him in a strict evangelical Protestant sect, was appalled to read the word "fuck" coming from her son's lips. Ailes spun her, saying that he was suing McGinniss for fabricating the dialogue.

AILES WENT ON TO WORK AT the Nixon White House, but his relationship with the president's inner circle soon cooled, and Watergate dealt his career a further setback. Over the next few years, Ailes toiled in the political wilderness as a speech coach for business executives and moonlighted as an Off Broadway producer. He ran a few political races in the late seventies before returning to TV in 1981 as executive producer of Tom Snyder's *Tomorrow: Coast to Coast.* Brought in when the hugely successful show was expanding from an hour to 90 minutes, Ailes shifted the focus away from serious interviews, junking it up with rock bands, T&A segments, and "Tom talking to Nancy Friday about orgasms," says one ex-producer.

Ratings plummeted. In 1982, the show was replaced by *Late Night With David Letterman,* and Snyder, once one of NBC's biggest stars, never fully recovered. Ailes was more resilient.

By 1981, the Reagan Revolution had dawned, and his ability to craft appeals to Nixon's disaffected cultural conservatives was to prove invaluable. Working first out of his home in Hell's Kitchen and then in a swank office on Park Avenue South with his second wife, Norma, a television producer, Ailes rose to become the country's preeminent GOP political consultant. He spoke the language of the Reagan Democrats, the construction workers and housewives featured in his widely imitated ads. "When you were in a campaign against him, you did not blink," says Democratic political consultant Bob Squier.

Still, he was never really a Reagan insider, and it wasn't until George Bush came along that Ailes—a handler with a knack for presenting himself as a peer—finally found his horse. "Roger smoked out the fact that Bush was surrounded by bland, upper-class, middlebrow, tennis-playing second-raters," says a former Bush adviser. "Roger would tell Bush,

Photograph by Ron Edmunds/AP/Wide World.

'You can't wear a short-sleeve shirt—you'll look like a fucking faggot.' Teacups dropped. But Bush liked Roger's act." (An Ailes spokesman denies that Ailes used the term *faggot* and claims that once, when the president was "flapping his arms," Ailes remarked that he resembled a "mythological fairy.")

His relationship with Bush was cemented after he helped the vice-president turn a hostile interview with Dan Rather over Iran-*contra* into a knockout victory. Ailes prepped Bush to equate his mistakes in Iran-*contra* with the voluble anchor's famous tantrum on a CBS set. (Regaling his Fox News staff with campaign war stories one day, Ailes told them that the issue he had been most concerned with in '88 was not Iran-*contra* but Jennifer Fitzgerald, a State Department employee rumored to be Bush's girlfriend. "Once I got a look at her, I was worried they'd get hold of a photograph," Ailes cackled.)

Under the direction of Ailes and the late Lee Atwater, the Bush campaign—the dirtiest in recent memory—questioned Democrat Michael Dukakis's patriotism, tarred him as unfit to be commander in chief, and introduced Willie Horton into American politics. With his zeal for victory at any cost, Ailes helped Bush become the first sitting vice-president since Martin Van Buren to win the top job. But the victory came at a price. "He took on the role of . . . attack dog," says Bush's former pollster Robert Teeter. "Half the time, Dukakis was answering Roger."

In future races, the infamous Ailes himself became an issue, and his subsequent clients suffered a string of defeats. The final slap came when, according to Bush Commerce secretary Robert Mosbacher, Ailes was "frozen out" of the Bush campaign as it geared up for 1992. Preempting the humiliating story, Ailes announced he was renouncing his political career and returning to television.

ONE EVENING A FEW MONTHS before, he had run into Rush Limbaugh at '21.' Limbaugh's radio show had established him as a political powerhouse, and Ailes convinced Limbaugh that a syndicated television show was the obvious progression. The two quickly became friends. Limbaugh tells the story of the time Ailes took him to dinner at the White House with George and Barbara Bush. "These people don't know how to *eat*!" Ailes told Limbaugh, insisting that the pair stop off for a snack before dinner across the street from the White House.

Ailes became executive producer of Limbaugh's late-night talk show, which initially drew strong ratings but had trouble landing desirable time slots in several important markets. Ailes bailed out of the show. A frustrated Limbaugh followed soon after.

AMONG FRIENDS **With Al D'Amato at a D.C. party. Ailes maintains close ties with several former clients. Sources claim he advised Rudy Giuliani during the recent election.**

Photograph by AP/Wide World.

In the early nineties, NBC president Bob Wright was looking for someone to take over CNBC, the cable business-news network spawned by NBC in 1989. A friend recommended Ailes, who promptly flew to Nantucket and convinced Jack Welch, chairman of NBC owner General Electric, that he was just the programmer Welch was looking for.

At NBC, the entrepreneurial Ailes set out to prove he could build a successful franchise within the constraints of corporate culture. In just two years, he helped transform CNBC from a ragtag network into the No. 1 financial-news network in the country. A talented marketer, he personally coined "First in business, first in talk," CNBC's tag line. During his tenure, ad sales doubled, ratings tripled, and the asset value of the channel soared from about $400 million to more than $1 billion.

While at CNBC, Ailes worked hard and tried to dispel the tabloid image he had picked up while he working at *Tomorrow.* Ailes caused a small uproar when he canceled the popular sex-advice show *Real Personal,* citing propriety. But one CNBC executive remembers, laughing, "When Marilyn Chambers was on *Real Personal,* [Ailes] wanted to meet her. He told her he'd seen all of her movies. There was a kind of built-in hypocrisy."

AILES'S SUCCESS WAS WIDELY NOTED throughout the industry. For a time, some even touted him as a future president of NBC. But the kudos proved short-lived. Inside NBC, questions were raised about his willingness to utilize his position to punish his enemies. "[Ailes would say,] 'Did somebody say something bad about me, GE, or CNBC? Let's do a story on them, let's get them back,' " one former CNBC news manager remembers. Such reports never aired. "A reporter would be assigned, and in a few days Roger would usually forget about it." (Ailes denies any such comments.)

Within months of arriving at CNBC, Ailes had turned his attention to creating America's Talking, a new cable channel that he vowed would become another MTV or ESPN. Though he launched it in record time, creating fourteen hours of original programming "out of my head," the channel was viewed as a cheesy flop.

The new shows on America's Talking reflected Ailes's "homespun woman-by-the-hearth, man-baling-hay midwestern rugged individualism," says one former producer. They included *Bugged!,* in which a film crew did man-on-the-street interviews to find out what was "bugging" people; *Pork,* a call-in show about government waste and fraud; and *Am I Nuts?,* with therapists dispensing advice. "When he had a blank canvas to create fourteen new shows, none of them worked," says one former CNBC executive.

Seasoned CNBC programmers say Ailes shut them out of America's Talking, choosing instead to bring in from retirement his closest friend, Chet Collier, who had hired Ailes on *The Mike Douglas Show* in the sixties. Another close confidante was the capable Elizabeth Tilson, CNBC's 33-year-old director of daytime programming, who occupied the top slot at America's Talking. Ailes seemed "infatuated" with the Marilyn Monroe look-alike, a former CNBC executive said. Tilson moved into a large corner office, and she and Ailes met frequently for lunch in a conference room that connected her office to his.

In 1995, Ailes and Norma divorced after fourteen years. (They had been separated since 1992.) Single again, with a taste for dinners at Le Cirque, he “had a lot of the Upper East Side ladies after him,” says his pal E. Jean Carroll, an *Elle* magazine columnist who hosted a pithy advice show on America’s Talking. “I bet he’s good in bed. He *loves* pleasure.” This spring, Ailes and Beth Tilson announced their engagement. Ailes has said their relationship was strictly professional while they were working together.

BY MID-1995, AS AMERICA’S Talking began to falter, Ailes seemed to unravel, too. There’s a reason Ailes and Nixon bonded from the start, says one former CNBC executive: “Roger doesn’t trust anybody. Everyone is out to screw [him].” In one staff meeting, recalls an eyewitness, jaws dropped as Ailes cruelly lashed out at Andy Friendly, the son of legendary CBS News president Fred Friendly, whose loyalty he had begun to suspect: “ ‘You know, Andy, there is nothing I or anybody in this room can do to make up for the fact that your father didn’t love you.’ ” (Ailes strongly denies that this incident ever occurred.)

The tension in the executive offices boiled over when, in an ugly clash, David Zaslav, CNBC’s chief of affiliate sales, had the temerity to dispute Ailes’s rosy projections for the network. At a company dinner in September 1995, according to someone who was present, Ailes announced to a group of loyalists, “Let’s kill the S.O.B.”

As it turned out, it was Ailes who would lose the subsequent battle. In November, Zaslav was promoted, and in effect, Ailes lost operational control of CNBC. In December, when NBC announced a deal with Microsoft to launch MSNBC, using the subscriber base of the now-defunct America’s Talking, Ailes was given no role. He announced his resignation in January; sources within the company say that though he retained the support of GE chairman Jack Welch, others at NBC, wearying of his combativeness, were happy to see him go. Once again, Ailes was on his own. But he apparently had an exit strategy in the works. A few days later, he was appointed chairman of Murdoch’s Fox News. In an extraordinary vote of confidence, 80 CNBC employees followed him across the river from Fort Lee to the new network’s Sixth Avenue headquarters.

IN LOVE AND WAR Ailes (with second wife Norma) left his first wife for a job with Nixon. He is currently engaged to Elizabeth Tilson, a former CNBC programming director.

RUPERT MURDOCH HAD LONG BEEN TRYING to establish a national news presence in America, to complement his global media and entertainment holdings. Three previous Fox News presidents had tried and failed to launch a newsmagazine or Sunday-morning talk show under Fox’s auspices. By 1996, the need grew urgent, as a number of high-profile stations defected from CBS to Fox. Ailes, who had met Murdoch while working as a consultant to Fox’s *A Current Affair,* proposed launching a cable news channel that could provide news to the Fox affiliates while making Murdoch a player in the 24-hour-news wars.

Early on, Murdoch envisioned his new network as a conservative CNN. But licensing arrangements with the Fox affiliates required News Corp. to present them with unbiased news. “If we come off as shills, we die,” admits Tony Snow, a Sunday Fox anchor.

Though Ailes, with his knack for tag lines, subsequently adopted “fair and balanced” as Fox’s credo, the network’s rightward tilt is unmistakable. Fox’s major on-air news personalities are conservative. So are the vast majority of its 30 or so on-air contributors. There isn’t a strong liberal voice in the bunch. Even the recently signed National Public Radio reporter Mara Liasson, touted as the house liberal, told Ailes she was a Republican before she was hired, according to one Fox insider. (Liasson declined to comment.)

Talk segments often proceed from a conservative premise, and the network’s panels tilt heavily to the right. A recent segment on President Clinton’s commission on race relations asked, “Will Clinton’s focus on race make existing problems worse?” The ensuing debate pitted three well-known conservative pundits against a sole liberal, Bill Tatum of the *Amsterdam News.* There are regular segments around the theme of “political correctness,” as in “Has p.c. changed our view of the Founding Fathers?” Fox is also big on charts and polls. One recent offering asked viewers who was more likely to cheat at cards, Clinton or Gore. (Clinton led, 52 to 40.)

Kim Hume, an ABC News veteran who now runs Fox’s Washington bureau with her husband, Brit, explains the channel’s news philosophy this way: “In the D.C. bureau [at ABC], we always had to worry what the lead story would be [the next day] in the New York *Times,* and God forbid if we didn’t have that story. Now [we] don’t care if we have that story.” Stories favored by the journalistic Establishment, Kim Hume says, are “all mushy, like AIDS, or all silly, like Head Start. They want to give publicity to people they think are doing good.”

Fox prefers to focus on people who are doing bad—especially if they’re Democrats, or environmentalists, a particular Murdoch peeve. The Clinton scandals hold a prominent place in its news lineup. Fox was the only network to carry GOP senator Fred Thompson’s campaign-finance hearings live, gavel to gavel, even though the channel took a hit in the ratings. “They pounded away on Filegate,” says Emily Rooney. “There was no original reporting, but there was a determination to cover it.” Jed Duvall, a veteran ABC reporter who spent a year at Fox before leaving this summer, recalls, “I’ll never forget the morning that one producer came up to me, and, rubbing her hands like Uriah Heep, said, ‘Let’s have something on Whitewater today.’ That sort of thing doesn’t happen in professional news organizations.”

In fact, Fox often seems to blithely disregard journalistic conventions that govern established news organizations. The line between neutral news anchor and opinionmeister is blurry. Before the November elections, anchor Tony Snow wrote an article for the Republican National Committee’s magazine, *Rising Tide,* endorsing Bob Dole, prompting complaints from the White House, which sends guests to the Sunday news program he hosts. “There’s no one here to say, ‘This is how Edward R. Murrow did it,’ ” Snow notes.

Hume, happily liberated from his days covering the

(continued on page 129)

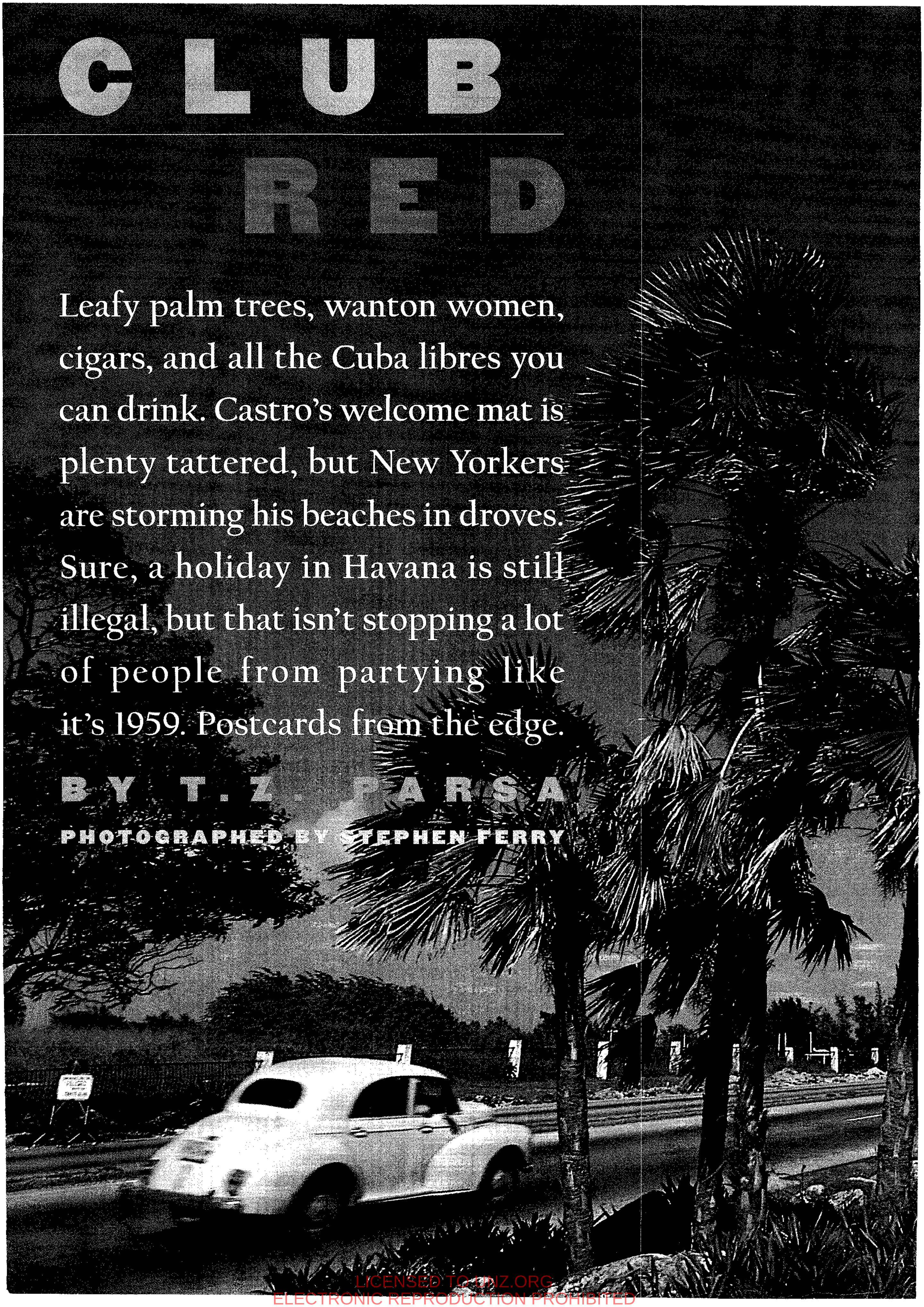
Photograph by James Colburn/IPOL.

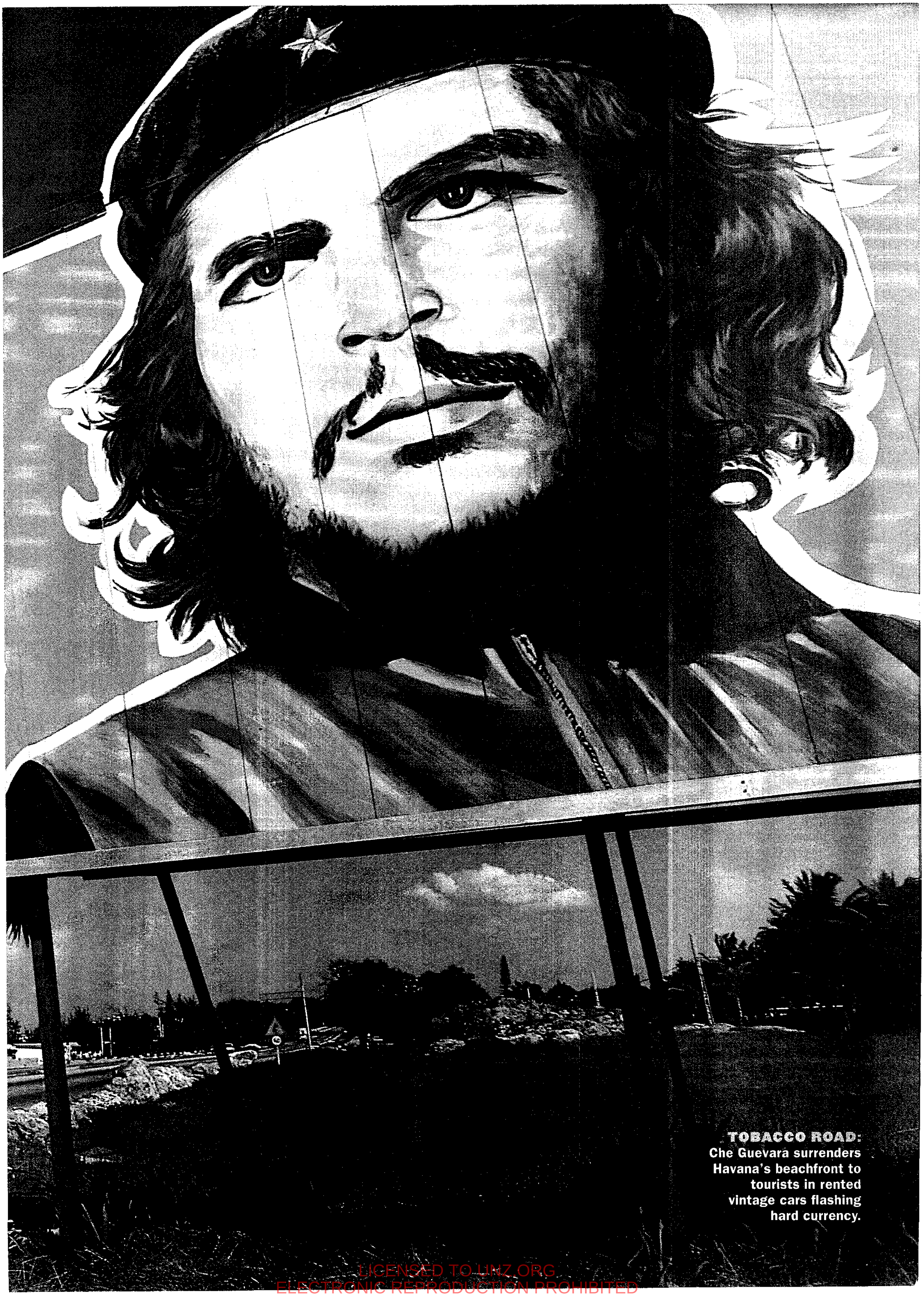
CLUB RED

Leafy palm trees, wanton women, cigars, and all the Cuba libres you can drink. Castro's welcome mat is plenty tattered, but New Yorkers are storming his beaches in droves. Sure, a holiday in Havana is still illegal, but that isn't stopping a lot of people from partying like it's 1959. Postcards from the edge.

BY T.Z. PARSA

PHOTOGRAPHED BY STEPHEN FERRY





TOBACCO ROAD: Che Guevara surrenders Havana's beachfront to tourists in rented vintage cars flashing hard currency.

A FEW MORE BOMBS AND A YUPPIE’S BOUND TO GET KILLED. THERE HAVE been eleven blasts in Havana since April, four in September alone, all targeting bars, restaurants, and hotels frequented by tourists. George, a Bear, Stearns investment banker who has come to Cuba on the sly with a friend, is worried. “No one told me about the bombs. With my luck, I’ll get a piece of shrapnel in my ass and have to explain myself to some embassy attaché. ‘Why are you in Cuba?’ he’ll ask me. ‘Why?’ I’ll tell him, ‘Because I’m an idiot and listened to my drunk friend Gene, that’s why. Because it was closer than Beirut.’ ” ■ The taxi drivers in Havana say Fidel is behind the bombings—an excuse to crack down on troublemakers before the pope pays a visit in January. But Cuba experts can’t fathom why Castro would risk scaring away tourists whose hard currency has brought the island’s economy back from the brink. Fidel blames exiles in Miami. The exiles say the bombs are the first signs of a popular uprising against the 71-year-old general.

Gene is in fine spirits—mashed mint stuck in his teeth, breath stinking of rum and pigskin. *Chicharrones* is Spanish for pork rinds, he informs the room, building a vocabulary where, before, all he knew of the island was Castro, *The Old Man and the Sea,* Ricky Ricardo, and *tu puta madre* from his doorman at 30th and Park.

He waves for another mojito—the drink for which La Bodeguita del Medio is famous, thanks to Hemingway. Gene points to where he has signed his name on the wall, just like Hemingway once did, just like everyone who comes to La B del M does, so that now most of the surrounding walls are covered in a roiling sea of scrawl. Americans are ingenious show-offs, however, and an indication of their growing presence in Cuba can be found in their freshly inked salutations on hard-to-reach wall space that 30 years’ worth of postrevolution vacationing Canadians, Italians, and Spaniards could not be bothered to fill in. Gene is tall and lanky and has managed, by dangling off a stair railing, to leave his mark.

La B del M was bombed on September 4—a small blast that splintered tables and erased a couple of thousand autographs from the walls. “The only reason I let Gene drag me here is that it’s already been bombed,” says George. “I figured they wouldn’t bomb the same place twice.”

“Just admit that it’s a beautiful city,” Gene protests. “Just admit it.”

George concedes the point: “It’s like the skeleton of the most beautiful woman you could imagine. In five years, Havana could be the most gorgeous place in the world. But right now it’s all bone, no flesh.”

THE ONLY U.S. CITIZENS WHO ARE SUPPOSED to be buying drinks in Cuba these days are journalists, people visiting their mortally sick relatives, and those on missions of sufficient cultural, religious, or professional gravitas to merit a travel license from the U.S. Treasury Department’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC).

Not many fast-laners can resist a furlough in Havana; whether they get there under such earnest pretexts is another matter. Cuba is a kick for trend-trafficking journalists like *Today* show executive producer Jeffrey Zucker, who went down five years ago and found “a beautiful city in need of a paint job,” and John F. Kennedy Jr., *George*’s editor-in-chief, who swung through two weeks ago—ostensibly to conduct one of his gonzo interviews with Dad’s arch-nemesis, Fidel Castro. Kennedy bunked at the Hotel Nacional.

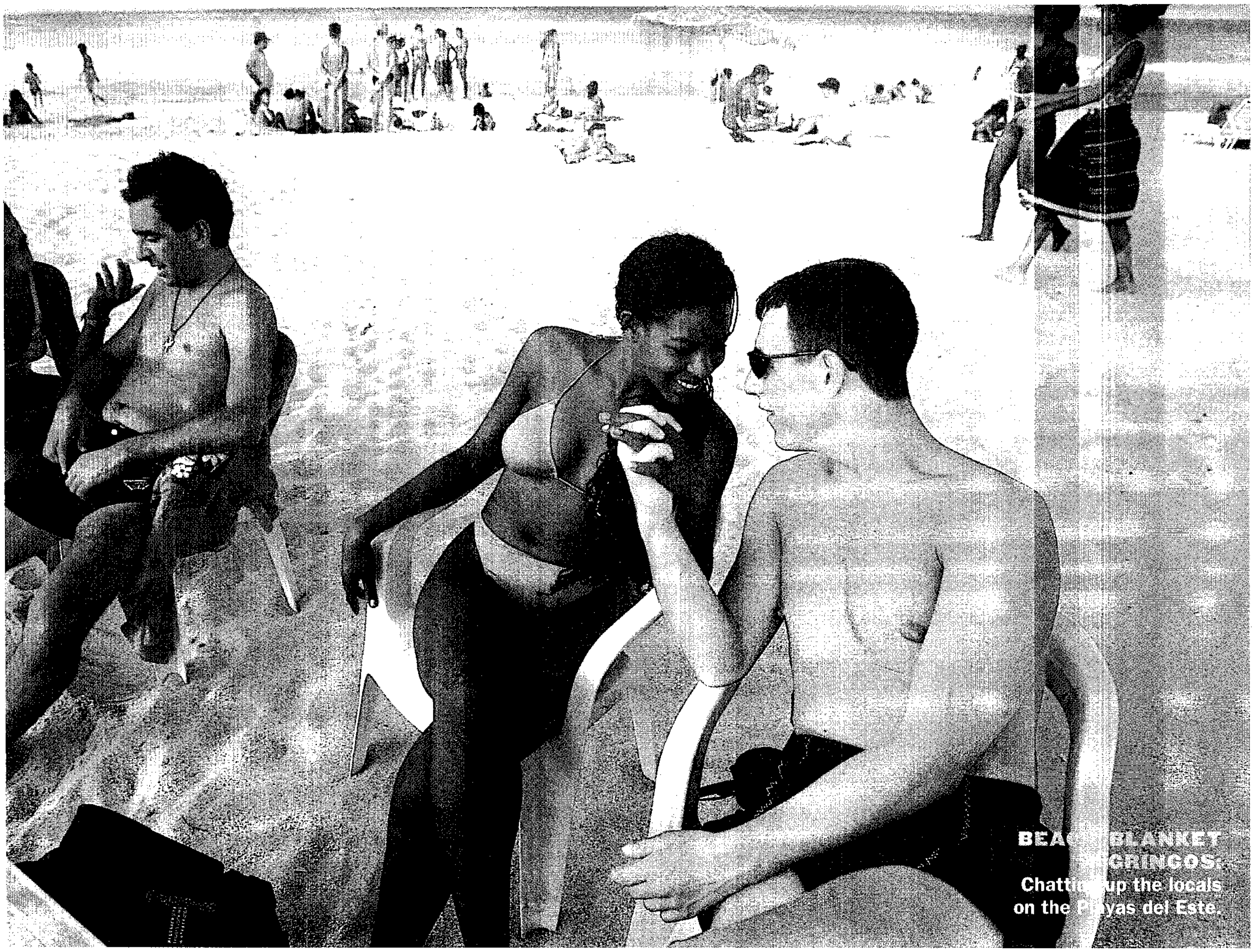
Hollywoodites are also increasingly leaving their footprints on Havana’s sidewalks. For years, director Sydney Pollack has partied in Cuba with a lively left-leaning crowd including Castro, Gabriel García Márquez, Harry Belafonte, and Sidney Poitier. Tom Fontana, producer of the NBC show *Homicide* and HBO’s *Oz* spent four days in Havana last month with *Oz* stars Lee Tergesen and Dean Winters. Fontana and Co. admitted to U.S. Customs that they’d been in Cuba, but merely producing a backpack with an NBC logo got them waved through. Fisher Stevens, who flew down last year with Matt Dillon, says his cigar-obsessed-matinee-idol pal is in Havana all the time. “I went to Berlin before the wall fell. I was in Russia right before glasnost,” says Stevens. “And I wanted to see Cuba before it collapsed.” At his elegantly frayed Havana hotel, he “half-expected Sydney Greenstreet to come walking through the door.” How long before Johnny Depp trashes a room at the Habana Libre after fueling all night on high-octane mojitos? Cuba’s sex appeal is even being felt in New York—hotelier Ian Schrager, whose wife Rita Norona is Cuban, has just opened the restaurant Asia de Cuba in the Morgans Hotel.

Vacationing in Cuba is against the law for *Americanos,* but the bookstores know us better than the Treasury Department—Barnes & Noble stocks four different Cuba guides. “Anyone can trav-

“This has always been a very New Y

“Meyer Lansky, the mob. Good-bye, Atlan

HEARTBREAK HOTEL: **Sinatra and Churchill romped at the now-faded Nacional.**



BEACH BLANKET GRINGOS: Chatting up the locals on the Playas del Este.

n," says Alex, in his Havana hotel room.
y, once a casino goes in down here."

el to Cuba," a senior OFAC official explains. "It's an economic embargo—we regulate financial transactions, not travel. Only licensed individuals can spend money there." That's the law, but OFAC's travel restrictions are becoming something of a dead letter.

Meet Ed, a 26-year-old New Yorker strolling peaceably through crumbling but picturesque Old Havana, speaking of arbitrage and sketching the rough outlines of his future business empire in Cuba. Ed admits he has come to the island illegally by way of Cancún, Mexico.

"Listen, it's a stupid law, and like most stupid laws, it's both unenforceable and destined to go away. I'm buying in cheap while most people are too scared to come."

Ed is unfazed by the bombings and the prospect of getting caught. "Risk, reward," he says. "How is Customs ever going to know I came to Cuba? And why should they care? I could understand if they were preventing me from going for my own safety or because Cuba was a terrorist state. But Havana is the safest city I've ever been to in Latin America. There are police everywhere, and the people are incredibly friendly. In Mexico City or Rio on business, I never leave my hotel room."

Ed is one of an estimated 84,000 U.S. citizens who will visit Cuba in 1997, according to John Kavulich, president of the U.S.-Cuba Trade and Economic Council, Inc., a private not-for-profit organization that provides information about Cuba. Approximately one fifth of those visitors are sneaking in. "You get a lot of lawyers traveling to Cuba illegally these days," Kavulich says. "They go to talk to Cuban lawyers, to get a feel for the place. My impression is that they're feeling things out, positioning themselves, getting ready."

A DOZEN CARIBBEAN DESTINATIONS offer the same sun, the same sea, the same sand, but Cuba's allure derives from the fact that it has yet to be leveled by the great tourist steamroller. No tour buses navigate Havana's narrow streets; few jet skis curdle the tide. No newlyweds bicker over steam-tray breakfasts in the rumba lounge of a tacky Radisson. Not yet.

In the Plaza Vieja, there is a lone Benetton store—the only first-world retailer on the island. But only Fidel, his cronies, and the tourists can afford to shop there. Most of the nicest cars on the island were the nicest cars 40 years ago—wide-finned Chevys and Oldsmobiles with all the bells and whistles—left behind by the fleeing aristocracy. Farmers and neurosurgeons alike ride bikes, hitch rides, and get pulled around in converted tractor-trailers that serve as Havana's people-movers; there are no "bad" parts of town, and the average mansion is home to two dozen lords and ladies living in equitably distributed dilapidation.

On the highways, army trucks rumble past billboards with Che Guevara's Christ-like visage radiating a martyred benediction upon Cuba's rundown infrastructure; *guajiros* (farmers) wave away leaded-gas fumes as they bicycle down back roads to cut sugar cane, machetes in their belts. On the road to Santiago: old women smoking cigars. On the white-sand beaches: Frenchmen in thongs.

The Old Havana hotels have been renovated, but the island remains relatively uncommercialized (with the exception of Havana's Varadero, which looks more and more like Miami Beach each year—

PULP FRICTION: Vertical lap-dancing near the Hotel Nacional. Girls park themselves outside discos, hoping a foreigner will foot their cover charges.

cheap new hotels cheek by jowl, all-you-can-eat buffets, white heads bobbing down cruise-ship gangplanks). The service in Cuba is bad—not rude but slow; be sure to order your second round before you are half done with your first. Castro went to great pains to jettison bourgeois institutions such as waiters and maids; it will take more than a generation for Cubans to acquire the solicitude that makes for top-notch service.

Talk to a Cuban for five minutes and you are struck by his or her cultural and political awareness. The children of the revolution are poor but educated. They have all their teeth. They quote poetry and beam a soldierly pride in having adhered to principle.

Cuba's isolation—its otherness—is today its biggest selling point to Americans weary of leis and drinks with long straws in coconuts and college kids belly-flopping into the hotel pool. For now, at least, Cuba lacks the homogenizing whitewash of free-market capitalism that gives you everything you want—but nothing you'll remember.

"It's fun to dance and drink and have sex," says Catea, a college student. "Maybe it's with a foreigner—so what?"

ALEX, AN ADVERTISING EXECUTIVE FROM Manhattan, is too cheap to take a sex tour in Thailand. He comes to Cuba instead. Alex has rented a suite in the Hotel Nacional. He is lounging in his air-conditioned room at noon, lobster-red from the beach, wearing linen pants and a pink oxford unbuttoned to his belly, hair brilliantined into a reflective helmet, puffing on a Cohiba Double Corona (Castro's favorite before he kicked the habit).

There is someone taking a shower in the bathroom. "Wait until you see her," Alex cackles. "Prime, prime, prime."

The Hotel Nacional is an architectural cousin of the Breakers Hotel in Palm Beach, and it rises with salmon-pink majesty above Vedado, the old hotel-and-casino district of Havana. Winston Churchill used to stay here, as did Frank Sinatra and all the gringo grandees who came in the fifties to wallow in sun-drenched vice. Vedado is where the gangsters played before Castro; where your granddad came to catch a live sex show before losing a paycheck at the craps table. In the past five years, Vedado has been resurrected—many fancy hotels and ooh-la-la cabarets, though no sex shows or gambling.

"It's not the sex or the girls so much as the atmosphere," Alex says. "That's why I love Cuba. It's like nowhere else, not even Brazil. It's louche yet clean."

The incidence of AIDS in Cuba is very low, thanks to regular, mandatory health inspections, including blood tests, as well as the government's practice of isolating HIV-positive Cubans in sanatoriums. Cuban law requires any visitor staying in the country for more than three months to take an HIV test.

The Nacional is a five-star hotel by Cuban standards, which turns out to be an important qualification. The winding rear patio overlooking the hotel's lush, green park is a first-rate place to relax with a drink (bombs notwithstanding); the rooms are large and well lit. Still, the luxe touch is missing. The elevator is a creaky box that stops operating at ten at night. The hallways smell of mildew and harsh disinfectant. Beds are lumpy. Water stains spot the ceilings. A midsize cockroach has thrown up its legs in despair behind Alex's bathroom door.

Hotels in Old Havana such as the Inglaterra, Ambos Mundos, and Santa Isabel are cheaper and just as comfortable—three-star hotels at a three-star price. Even so, the old, fancy hotels in Vedado (the Nacional, Capri, and Victoria, for example) are a good place to lay your bones your first night in Havana. A room costs twice as much as in Old Havana, but it will give you a sense of the debauchery that once permeated the city and seems ready for a comeback.

"This has always been a very New York town," says Alex. "Meyer Lansky, the mob. Good-bye, Atlantic City, once a casino goes in down here."

A young Cuban woman emerges from the bathroom wearing last night's spandex disco outfit. Alex emits a low whistle. The girl gyrates her hips provocatively and laughs.

"How do you say *walk of shame* in Spanish?" Alex asks.

The girl shakes hands firmly and introduces herself. Niurdes says she's a philosophy student at the University of Havana. "He is a pig," she says in Spanish, sitting on the edge of the bed beside Alex and picking a thread from his shoulder. "But he is very cute. Are you in Havana for tonight? I have a friend that would love to meet you." Niurdes smiles widely as she leaves, showing perfect white teeth. "You'll call me at seven, then, for dinner?" she says in Spanish.

Alex nods enthusiastically. "Not a chance in hell," he says in English and gives her a peck on the cheek.

"A very nice girl," he says after she leaves. "But, to paraphrase Churchill, going around with a girlfriend in Cuba is like bringing a sausage roll to a banquet."

IT'S NOT HARD TO SPOT THE PROSPECTORS in Havana. You see them taking meetings on the patio of the Hotel Nacional, dirty-dancing with 16-year-olds in the discos, reading the *Wall Street Journal* at José Martí International Airport. They don't carry cameras and guide books. They're not here to follow the Hemingway trail. They're in Havana to take advantage of Cuba's proximity to the United States, its immense natural resources, and the inevitable normalization of relations between the two countries that they are betting will occur sooner rather than later. There are indications that they are right.

Since 1963, U.S. law has prohibited almost all commercial relationships between Cuba and the United States. However, recent legislation introduced in the House of

Representatives promises to punch a large hole in the embargo by allowing U.S. companies to sell food and medicine to Cuba.

"The Europeans and Canadians have been doing business in Cuba for years, but they are really just waiting to be bought out by Americans when the embargo is lifted," says Pamela Falk, a Cuba expert and professor of international and commercial transactions at CUNY's School of Law. "Two years ago, José Martí was full of U.S. corporate jets. Many thought that Clinton would change policy toward Cuba in his second term. They were signing nonbinding letters of intent, scouting locations. Then the Brothers to the Rescue planes got shot down. Clinton signed the punitive Helms-Burton bill, and everything froze in place."

The pope may prove to be the icebreaker—His Holiness is scheduled to visit Castro's decaying Xanadu in January. It will be the first papal visit since the 1959 revolution, and Fidel's hosting of the pope is widely seen as part of a broader strategy to pressure the United States to lift the embargo. The pope's opposition to the embargo for humanitarian reasons is widely known, and Castro is hoping for a public denunciation.

Dan Snow, a Bible-quoting Kentucky-based fishing-tour operator who has been organizing illegal fishing trips to Cuba for the past twenty years, is counting on the pope to change things. "The pope is going to lay it all out for the world about this shameful embargo," says Snow. "That should do it. Only a fool would try to rough-dance with the pope."

DAN SNOW IS THE ONLY U.S. CITIZEN in the history of the embargo to serve jail time for traveling illegally to Cuba (45 weekends in 1990 and 1991), after being found guilty of five felony violations under the Trading With the Enemy Act. Undaunted, he continues to bring fishing parties to the island and is expanding his tour business to include trips for scuba divers, hunters, bird-watchers, and cigar fans. He's even offering charters of Castro's private yacht.

Not every American doing business in Cuba is breaking the law. OFAC permits businesses to operate in Cuba in certain sectors, such as humanitarian enterprises, publishing, and news gathering. Since 1994, U.S. citizens have also been allowed to own a noncontrolling minority interest in a foreign company doing business in Cuba as long as revenue from those operations is not the foreign company's major source of revenue. Days Inn and Choice Hotels International have invested in foreign companies with hotels in Cuba.

As far as Castro is concerned, the more Americans spending dollars on the island, the better. For most of the Cold War, Cuba was buttressed by Russian subsidies—its sugar purchased at above-market prices, its oil Russian and sold on the cheap. But since roughly 1991, Castro has been desperate to attract foreign currency to replace the vanished subsidies.

A new foreign-investment law was enacted by Castro's government in 1995, allowing 100 percent foreign ownership of businesses in Cuba, the right to repatriate hard-currency profits, and indemnity against expropriation of assets. This last is an important consideration, given the expropriation of more than $2 billion worth of assets in 1959 and 1960 never returned to foreign owners.

The most remarkable result of Castro's embrace of foreign investment has been the explosion of the tourist industry. In 1996, tourism surpassed sugar production as Cuba's largest source of hard currency for the first time since the revolution; Cuba now has more than 27,000 hotel rooms, more than Puerto Rico and the Bahamas combined. The pope's visit promises to pump the industry further.

"My friends and I are starting a business here, and if it's illegal by U.S. standards, so what?" Ed says defiantly before disappearing into the lobby of the newly reno-

FANTASY ISLAND

THE ROUTES AND THE RISKS

THOUGH CUBA IS ONLY 90 MILES AWAY from the tip of Florida, there are no scheduled flights from the U.S. The quickest way to get there is to hop a flight to Nassau in the Bahamas and then a connection to Havana. American Airlines offers flights from New York to Nassau that are as low as $290; the connection to Havana can cost as little as $160, but everyone has to fly Cubana airlines, aboard one of the government's ancient Yakovlev YAK-42's.

An alternative route is through Mexico City or Cancún with a connection to Havana on either Cubana or Mexicana airlines. (Reserve ahead, and the whole trip costs around $800 coach.) People must book the Cuba leg of the trip through an airline office or travel agent outside the United States. Call Mexicana de Aviación (52-5-325-0990) or Cubana de Aviación (52-5-255-3776) if leaving from Mexico, or Havanatur (242-394-7194) if leaving from Nassau.

The likelihood of getting in trouble for touring Cuba illegally is low. "Let's face it," says John Kavulich of the U.S.-Cuba Trade and Economic Council, Inc. "U.S. Customs officers have a lot more to worry about—drugs, firearms, illegal aliens." Even so, most Cuba experts recommend that travelers procure a license before traveling to Cuba; apply to OFAC, the U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (202-622-2480). The Center for Cuban Studies in Manhattan (242-0559) will assist in processing license applications for $50 or will do it free of charge for travelers participating in one of the center's cultural trips.

On paper, defying the embargo or travel restrictions means big trouble: criminal penalties of up to ten years in prison and $1 million in corporate or $250,000 in individual fines. Beginning in 1992, civil penalties of up to $55,000 per violation were also instituted. However, OFAC statistics indicate that relatively few tourists find themselves in any serious hot water. "No one gets thrown in jail," says Sandra Levinson, executive director of the Center for Cuban Studies. "But with civil penalties, there's now some risk. I've been hearing about people getting fined, sometimes thousands of dollars. They might not get you the first time you go, but the second time—suddenly they pull you out of line [at Immigration], and later you get a letter from the Treasury Department asking you to detail all your expenditures in Cuba, where you stayed, how you got there. Who knows how they know you went, but they do." Since 1992, OFAC has collected approximately $1.5 million in civil penalties for embargo violations found in 257 separate cases (most were assessed to banks that failed to file the correct paperwork).

Cuban Immigration does not pound U.S. passports with an official entry stamp (though they've begun to stamp them with a cryptic mark resembling a round-roofed house). Levinson hypothesizes that OFAC must now have spotters in Mexican and Bahamian airports who alert U.S. Customs to citizens returning from Cuba, or that perhaps OFAC is being supplied information by foreign airlines that fly to Cuba. Michael Sheehan, a spokesperson for the Customs management center in South Florida, confirms Levinson's suspicion: "We have agents in Nassau and other jumping-off points to Cuba." ■

vated Hotel Ambos Mundos. “Its only illegal until you get really rich; then it becomes unorthodox and farseeing. Wasn’t the original Kennedy a rumrunner? You got to have balls to get a jump on everyone else. You’ve got to be a pirate.”

IT IS A SCOTCH-AND-CIGAR EVENING IN June at the private Anglers’ Club on Broad Street. George Plimpton, in his role as hired chit-chattist for Macallan Scotch, is passing around a pile of oral snapshots that have become worn from frequent handling—the time he hung out with Hemingway at El Floridita (a tacky bar in Havana that ties with the Tropicana as Cuba’s biggest tourist trap) and Faulkner showed up in an admiral’s cap; something about Tennessee Williams’s dog.

An older gentleman—a partner in a Manhattan law firm of the Republican persuasion and a guest of the club for the evening—leans over, Hoya de Monterrey jutting from his pucker, and drowns out Plimpton with a gruff anecdote of his own: “Cuba. Ever been there? Wonderful fishing. First-rate. There last month. Forget that deep-sea Hemingway crap. I’m talking fly rod and reel. Bonefish. More bonefish than you can imagine. Two thousand dollars for a week of fishing. Best money I ever spent.”

The inner reach of the long Bay of Havana is a putrid stew of sewage and gasoline whose wafting odor can jolt you from a sound sleep in your Old Havana hotel room three blocks inland. But it’s only a two-hour drive from Old Havana to the gigantic Ciénaga de Zapata national park on Cuba’s south coast, which offers pristine wetlands, isolated beaches, crystal-clear water, and some of the best fly-fishing in the world.

I am driving along rutted and near-desolate Cuban roads in a rented Hyundai with my friend Withers. Our destination is Playa Girón on the coast of the Bay of Pigs. For $100, a guide at the ranger station named Guillermo promises to show Withers more bonefish than he’s ever seen.

We tool along the coast, the three of us crowded into Guillermo’s small boat. Clear blue water laps up against mangrove forests and small rocky beaches. Flocks of pink flamingos rise into the air as Guillermo poles us into his secret cove. He points out what looks like a portly man in a wetsuit snorkeling nearby but is, in fact, a manatee grazing among the sea grass. The water is teeming with squadrons of bonefish. The air is full of birds. Withers can barely speak. Guillermo just looks at us with a big, proud smile.

Don Causey, who edits *The Angling Report,* a fishing newsletter published out of Miami, confirms that Cuba has become a destination for U.S. anglers. “I was just down in Cuba—in a journalistic capacity, you understand—fishing the Bay of Pigs, and on my way back I saw Dan Snow helping ten bass fishermen through Customs on their way back to New York. They were all going off about how great the fishing was; I don’t think any of them really understood that they were breaking the law.”

OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS, SMUGGLING CIgars out of Cuba has, to a certain type of Waspy young professional male in Manhattan, become the adult equivalent of sneaking butts behind chapel after study hall. A long weekend in Havana—catch the show at the Tropicana, do the foreign-disco thing, burn your nose at the beach, then hit the cigar factories and just see who stokes the big boss man with a couple of Cohibas at the firm Christmas party. It is what running with the bulls in Pamplona was in the eighties, only you come back with a tan and some stogies instead of bruises and a wineskin that hangs off the corner of your bed.

Americans traveling to Cuba with OFAC permission are allowed to bring up to $100 worth of Cuban goods into the U.S., which may include cigars. The Cuban government allows the export of up to 200 cigars but requires proof (should they search your bags) that the cigars were purchased from a state-owned factory or shop rather than from one of the hustlers who proposition tourists on the streets of Havana with the promise of cheap cigars. Odds are that a traveler’s bags will not be searched in Cuba or in the U.S.; however, the Cuban authorities have been increasingly suspicious since the bombings began.

Black-market cigars will be confiscated by Cuban Customs, and U.S. Customs will destroy all cigars carried by unlicensed travelers. A Manhattan corporate lawyer who has traveled to Cuba on several cigar-buying jaunts offers the following advice: “Never buy black-market. Save your receipts until you get through Cuban Customs. Throw them away before you get back in the States. I had a friend—a real genius—who kept the receipts stuck in his passport. You can imagine what happened when he went through Passport Control in New York.”

A weekend in Havana is what running w

only you come back with a tan and sc

Industry sources claim that the U.S. luxury-cigar market has grown 300 percent in the past four years, which pretty much assures the existence of individuals like the kid sitting in front of me on the Cubana airlines flight into Havana.

He’s engaging everyone around him in loud, tortured conversations about where he can get Cuban cigars at the lowest prices. Not the tourist prices, he’s insisting, but the real, low-down, insider prices, as if a socialist country marketing perishable luxury goods to status-conscious tourists would have extensive reduced-price bins. His Spanish is not great, however, and he’s saying *cigarro* (cigarette) when what he really means is *puro* (cigar). Even he knows something is wrong when the old guy next to him explains in slow, broken English that he can find what he wants in any Havana bar, 25 for a buck.

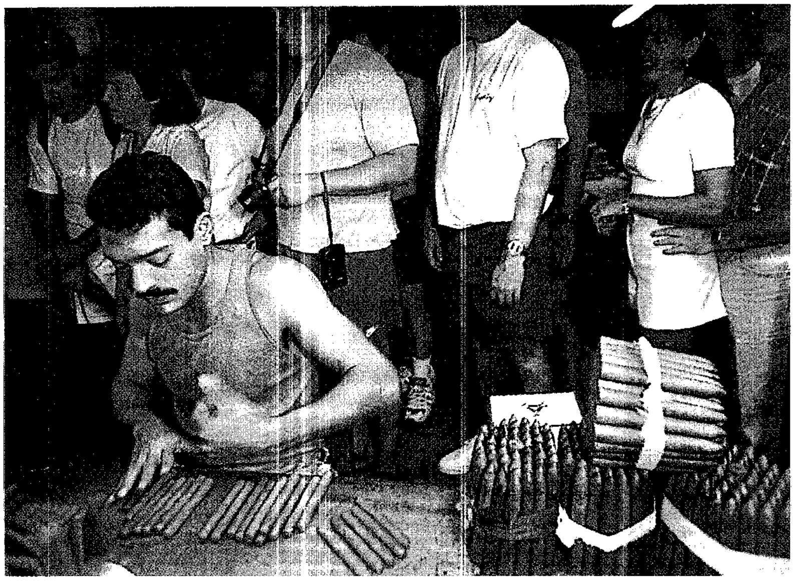
The amateur is maybe 19 and makes no secret that he’s planning to smuggle cigars back to New York to hawk in the cigar bars around town. He says he’s taken a $5,000 cash advance out on his credit card to finance the venture.

“You’ve got to be careful,” a Manhattan corporate lawyer says. “There’s a lot of crap out there passing for Cubans. People steal the boxes and the rings from the factories and then get their uncle Juan to roll up a bunch using whatever is lying around the bodega. You get referred to a reliable dealer and you always go back to him. Remember, these are delicate, handcrafted objects—like sushi. It’s not just fish and rice.”

ALEX IS PARTYING LIKE A ROCK STAR AT THE high-tech disco in the El Comodoro hotel, sandwiched between two gorgeous mulatto women, doing the Cuban porno-boogie, one hand on the breast of the woman in front of him and the other on the buttocks of the one behind him—a three-person conga line. Coolio is booming and Alex’s cigar has smoldered down to a fetid, soggy nub. Everyone is grinning like a maniac.

There are few Cuban men at the Comodoro; the entrance fee is $10, and girls wait outside to be invited in by generous male tourists. In the nineties, a significant number of Cuban women decided to adopt Lycra as their national fabric and male tourists as their national pastime.

In Spanish, *puta* is slang for *prostitute* and *jinetero* means *jockey.* In Cuba, *jinetero* is a pejorative term that broadly describes anybody who disports with foreigners outside the tourist conduits approved by Fidel. The male grifters in Old Havana who offer bogus cigars for half the showroom prices are *jineteros,* as are the young dudes who speak fluent English and offer to guide pale, blinking Canadian couples around the old town. The girls outside the tourist discos looking to have someone pay their cover charge are *jineteras,* as are the ones who stroll the Malecón (Havana’s beautiful four-



A cigar roller at the Partagas factory, where black marketeers stockpile stogies to sell back home in Manhattan for $25 apiece.

mile-long seaside boulevard) in micro-skirts at night waving at the rental cars, as is the disturbingly young girl who asks me for a cigarette, a light, a drink, and a hundred bucks to have sex with her, all within a minute's conversation.

Not all *jineteras* are *putas,* though, and not every girl who dances with a foreigner is a *jinetera.* This is all explained to me by Catea, a microbiology student at the University of Havana who wears a skin-tight baby T with the words SUPER, ROCKER, SEX, CLUB, and PARTY stacked top to bottom on the front.

"We are sexually liberal in Cuba," she says. "We are educated about sex very early, and maybe also it's because the church is not so influential here." She is 22; quotes Benedetti, Neruda, and Carpentier; dreams of engineering DNA in Switzerland; and has a body that would cause a Hard-hat Harry to collapse into his lunch box. She has had 30 lovers, some of them foreign tourists, but categorically denies being promiscuous.

"Maybe 40 percent of the girls here are *jineteras,*" she says, looking around the club. "The rest are just having fun—it's fun to dance and have a drink and have sex. Maybe it's with a foreigner—so what? Maybe the foreigner buys you something—why not? The girls that take money—they do it because they want to; no one dies of hunger in Havana. They do it to buy luxuries. Ten years ago, everyone was equal; now people want to have things that only dollars can buy. They want to live like Americans."

bulls in Pamplona was in the eighties,

gies instead of bruises and a wineskin.

'CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT IS going to happen to the property market in Cuba once the blockade is lifted?" Doc, a U.S. citizen originally from California, asks. It's five in the morning after a night of heavy disco and boozing, all of us sitting around a table eating moros y cristianos (black beans and white rice) in the high-walled kitchen of a crumbling mansion in the Miramar district of Havana, west up the coast from Vedado. Doc purchased the spooky house for his Cuban girlfriend two years ago. Her name is Regina, and she is a tiny thing in the huge kitchen.

"Sure, it's a risk investing in property in a socialist system, but we're not talking about Vietnam or Romania," Doc says, laughing. "We're 90 miles from Key West here; it's like buying prime real estate in South Beach at 10 cents on the dollar. There is a tremendous upside."

Ownership of Cuban property by foreigners is a violation of Cuban law. Cuba's new foreign-investment law hints at the possibility of foreigners' being allowed to negotiate leases with the government. "What you hear about is long-term leases of land—up to 99 years in some cases—by joint ventures," says CUNY's Professor Falk. The embargo would prohibit Americans from assuming leases, but that's not to say a lot of U.S. citizens aren't having a friend in Spain buy a beach house for them.

Regina is a cooking-school graduate whom Doc met at a disco a few years ago while on an OFAC-licensed medical exchange program with a Havana hospital. Doc is lean and tanned, a widower from California who speaks a lovely slow and fluent Spanish.

"I came down here legally at first," Doc says. "Special license, the whole thing. But this," he waves around at the spacious but grubby kitchen, "this is very illegal, and so is every time I come down here these days. I could apply for a special license, but I don't bother."

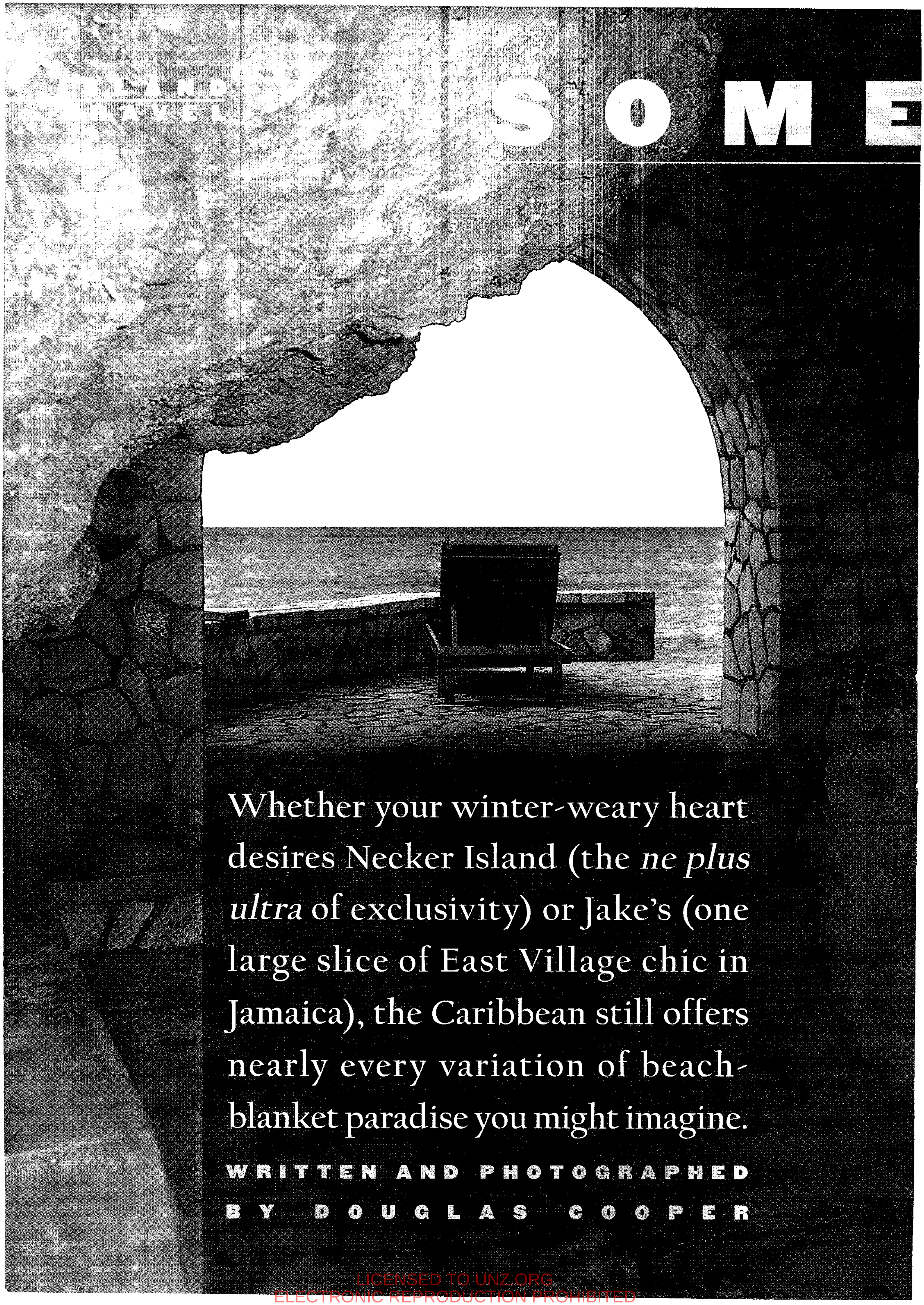
Soon after the revolution, the majority of private property in Cuba was nationalized, making the government the biggest landlord in the country. According to Professor Falk, however, some residences in Cuba were not nationalized and are passed by inheritance. It is a violation of Cuban law for Cubans to buy and sell private property; however, the trading of inherited residences is permitted.

Doc explains that he and his girlfriend secured the house—a fifteen-room mansion surrounded by embassies and diplomatic residences—for little more than $45,000. "I had a suitcase full of money, just like in a movie. Of course, I was scared—I don't want to go to jail. I sailed in a friend's boat from Key West. It would have cost me three times as much if they had known an American was buying," Doc says. "Regina did all the negotiating—she's quite a little haggler. There was some little old lady living here before—all the kids had gotten out to Miami in the eighties."

Doc uses empty beer bottles to describe the complicated barter transaction. "You can't buy—you have to trade. So we swapped a house that Regina's parents owned out in the countryside—a worthless shack, just a token, but with proper title papers—for this house and the suitcase of money. Then the old lady who was living here swapped the shack and some of the money from the suitcase for a little apartment in Old Havana. Then the owners of the apartment swapped the shack and some of the money they got from the old lady for a different apartment, which they got from a family who had two apartments in Old Havana. The shack was just the chit that made it legal under Cuban law—just a formality. It was really all about money. The lawyers handle everything once the price is set—they even arrange it so that everyone 'moves' on the exact same day."

When asked how he felt about the house being in his girlfriend's name, Doc just smiles. "Love's all about faith, isn't it? Sometimes you got to have that faith."

As for the future of Cuba, Doc is also sanguine. "Things are changing fast these days—you can see it all around. There are more Americans around town, more investment both legal and illegal. The Cubans are an incredibly well-educated people—they're learning very quickly how to live with a free market. The transition won't be as hard as it was in Eastern Europe. You won't be able to get houses like mine for long. I mean, when the blockade is lifted, *all this* is going to be a three-hour flight from New York." ■

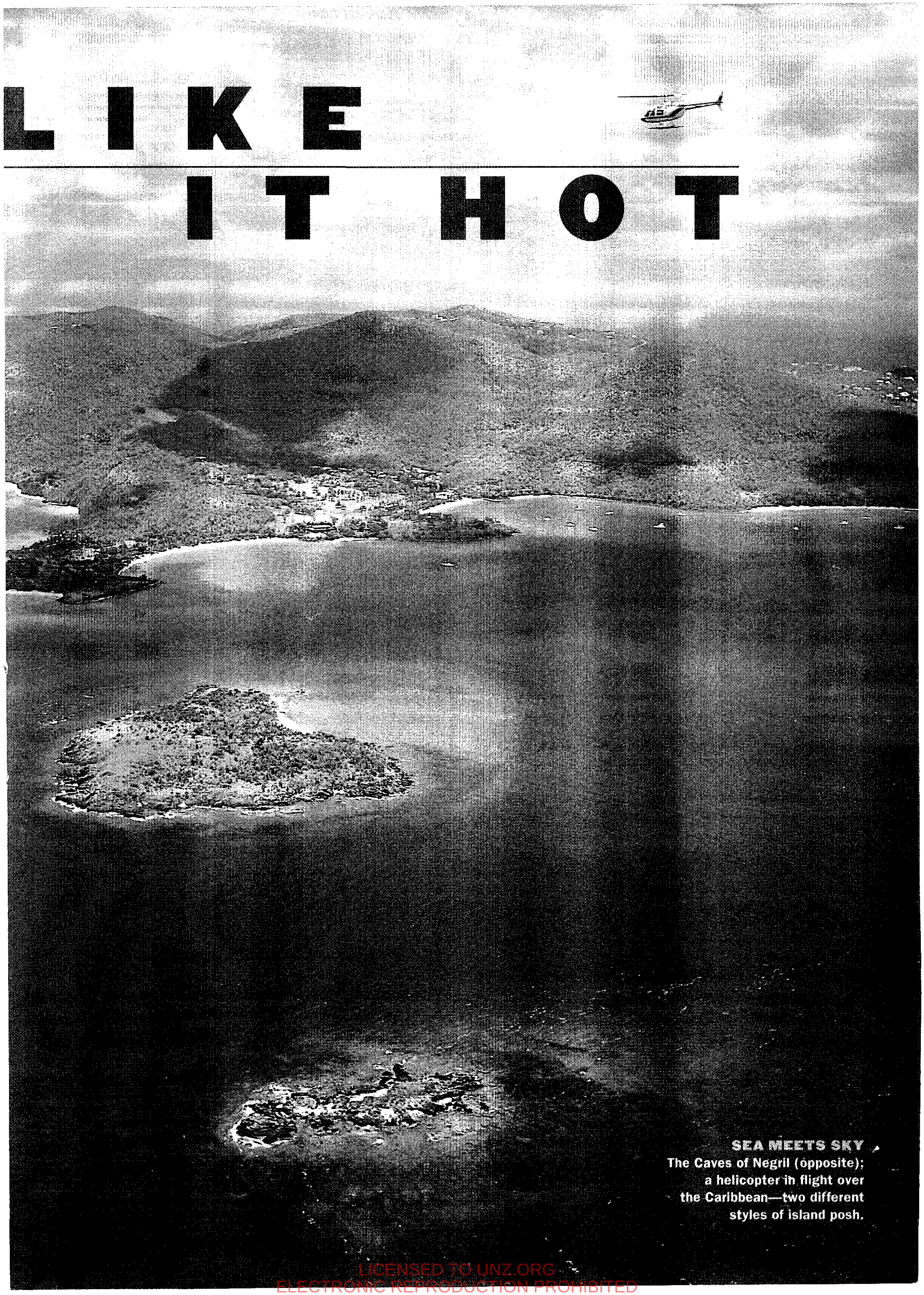


SOME

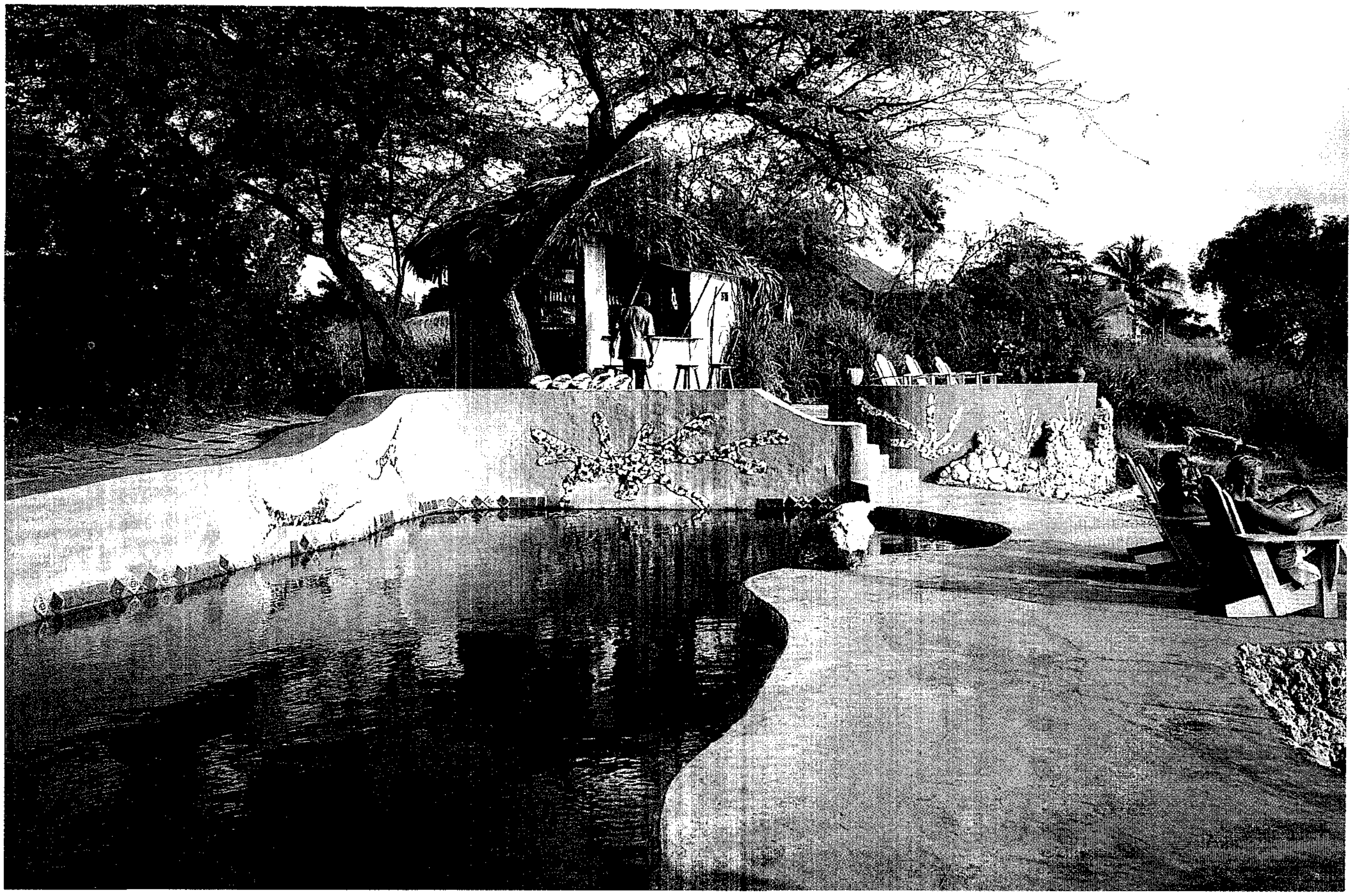
Whether your winter-weary heart desires Necker Island (the *ne plus ultra* of exclusivity) or Jake's (one large slice of East Village chic in Jamaica), the Caribbean still offers nearly every variation of beach-blanket paradise you might imagine.

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY DOUGLAS COOPER

LIKE IT HOT



SEA MEETS SKY
The Caves of Negril (opposite); a helicopter in flight over the Caribbean—two different styles of island posh.



JAKE'S There'

is a blue

WE ALL HAVE OUR NIGHTMARES, AND MINE TEND TO INVOLVE LIMbo dancing. The setting: a generic Caribbean resort. I am in mid-tan. I am pleasantly sinking into a nice coma, from which I am destined, tragically, to emerge. Always, it turns ugly in the same way: A sinister, leering cheerperson, peppiness personified, hauls me forcibly from my beach chair and insists I bend backward, knees akimbo, to execrable music. "We're lowering the bar, folks!" ■ Drenched in sweat, heart seized up like an old engine, I wake up screaming, *I am not a limbo dancer, I am a human being!* ■ But there are no limbo dancers here, just a couple of wise Rastafarians ruminating over ganja with Brandon from the Peace Corps. It was all a terrible dream; I am at Jake's in Jamaica, perhaps the cheapest resort in the Caribbean, and if I'm soaked in perspiration, it's because I've fallen asleep, like an idiot, beneath a molten noonday sun.

My assignment is to experience a sampler of Caribbean destinations: one ludicrous bargain; a couple of mid-priced spots, including an all-inclusive resort; and three of the most expensive—and lauded—properties in the world. My mission? To remain vertical, despite even the most vigorous efforts to fold me beneath a limbo bar.

JAKE'S, MON

Jake's is run—well, walked—by Jason Henzell, an intensely affable man whose father wrote and directed the definitive reggae film, *The Harder They Come.* Even if you think you have some sense of Jamaica, you may be surprised by this location. Jake's is just outside a small fishing village on the southern coast, blissfully removed from the tourist circuit. The rooms don't lock. There are no safes for valuables. None of this is deemed necessary. The local fauna treat your villa as a natural extension of their domain: A friendly dog sleeps on my balcony all night.

Not that Jake's hasn't been discovered. The cheekboned from New York and London have been visiting this little resort for some time, a consequence of its association with Chris Blackwell, the founder of Island Records. Blackwell made a bundle off Cat Stevens, Traffic, Bob Marley, et al., then sold his company to PolyGram for $300 mil. His organization, Island Outpost, represents a number of finer island properties. He does not own Jake's, but you can book your stay through Island Outpost, and Jake's is considered part of his rarefied universe. If you go, expect to meet a model or two, and perhaps a reggae phenom.

There is nothing to do at Jake's. That is the point of Jake's: to do nothing in as slow a manner as possible, with impunity. You're pretty far from anything you've ever heard of—a two-hour drive from the airport at Montego Bay—and a tour of the local town, Treasure Beach, isn't going to quicken your pulse.

My suite, the Abalone Room, is awash in aquamarine paint, and there's a terra-cotta balcony overlooking the sea. Over my bed is a blue stuccoed dome, inset with tiny colored windows—the severed bottoms of wine bottles—which admit tinted rays of morning sun. I have my own bathroom and shower. The price? Around $100 a night.

The eight villas—each an idiosyncratic folly named after a species of shell—were designed by Jason's mother, Sally, who once dressed windows at Selfridge's in London. The design scheme, inspired by Antoni Gaudí, is pan-Mediterranean baroque: A little piece of Cap d'Antibes,

AWASH IN AQUAMARINE The Abalone Room at Jake's, with its terra-cotta balcony.

IN THE DRINK **Lounging by the poolside bar at Jake's, on the Jamaica coast.**

half a teaspoon of Mykonos, a dab of Ibiza. Icons and odd ornate flourishes punctuate walls saturated with deep color; the furniture is wildly eclectic, culled from various decades and styles to harmonize with the architecture.

I am happy at Jake's. I could *live* at Jake's. Back when I was a nomad, this was precisely the sort of place that made me pleased to be alive: the Hotel Nesle in Paris, dirt cheap, with gold Cleopatras on purple walls; Dahab in the Sinai peninsula, last of the hippie retreats, filthy and beautiful. Jake's has this ambience, sans filth, with a slightly elevated price and a more respectable clientele.

If you value the things associated with the East Village—authenticity, marginal culture, the effortless access to superior herb—you'll love this place. Of course, it's no longer possible to experience authentic bohemia without tripping over supermodels. But they won't bite, and if you're an actual bohemian, they'll appreciate your presence. Some of these people aren't ready for unalloyed luxury yet, and the scruffy presence of the occasional slacker helps ease them into the experience. Places like this are luxe with training wheels.

Not that Jake's is for everyone. The rooms, though infinitely hip, are not precisely lavish; it's a bit like living at the Yaffa Cafe. The service is . . . appropriate. Lunch at the informal restaurant—a patio that spills out on either side of the front desk—can take an hour to arrive. Still, if you're accustomed to the benign indifference cultivated by waiters on Avenue A, you'll be primed and even impressed: The service at Jake's may be slow, but it's genuinely pleasant. I order lobster with butter, garlic, and onions; the entire meal, with fruit for dessert and strong coffee, comes in at well under $20.

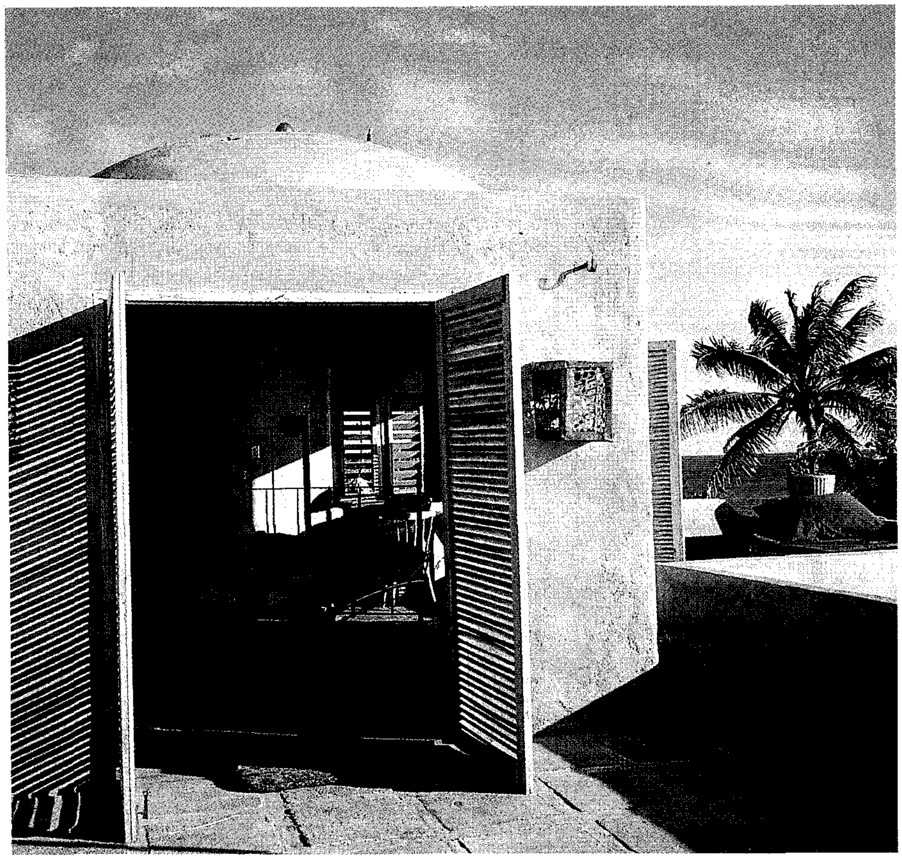
Jake's does not purport to offer you much more than sheer atmosphere. The beach is hilariously small, if pretty; it's maybe forty paces from one end to the other. Lunch and dinner are served on the patio, drinks at the tiny bar beside the diminutive pool.

I am scheduled to visit six resorts in total, four different islands, and Jake's is where I meet most of the people I really want to know. I hang with a British doctor, originally from Goa. She practices conventional medicine but prefers homeopathy, and insists on driving me east along the coast to the Milk River Baths, a vaunted spa she claims will change my life.

The drive to the baths is epic, however. We get lost and explore vast tracts of Jamaica. Our tiny posse includes Leo, a voluble Frenchman who makes art videos and speaks fluent Parisian hyperbole—*"Ees vairy good, vairy beautiful"*—and Cathy, Chris Blackwell's personal assistant.

The "spa," upon arrival, is a dimly lit institutional building of painted concrete. It looks like a YMCA. We are given a key to our tiny private pool, wall-to-wall in a dank, high-ceilinged room about the size and comfort of a decent prison cell. We strip and enter the unknown liquid. It proves a soothing, anticlimactic experience: very much akin to, um, immersing oneself in water.

ra-cotta balcony overlooking the sea. Above my bed
ed dome. There is nothing to do at Jake's. That is the point.



THE CAVES OF NEGRIL

If you must soak yourself in dim chambers, drive to the westernmost tip of Jamaica, to the Caves, a utopian property situated incongruously amid the fleshpots of Negril. Negril, as you probably know, apparently was put on earth solely to prove Sartre's dictum "Hell is other tourists." I live in Manhattan, and I have never come close to experiencing taxi drivers as abusive as the thugs who purport to offer that service in Negril. Waitresses rendered so callous by waves of lager louts that they routinely shortchange you and simply shrug when caught.

Negril is a case study in overdevelopment. Less than a decade ago, the area was considered *the* place to be, and now, well, everybody's there. The beach is so densely packed with loud bars that the music at any given establishment cannot be heard above the music from the bar at either side: cacophony bordering on incest.

This is the last place you would expect to find the Caves, a brand-new resort so entirely removed from the pace of ordinary life that it makes even Jake's look manic. Admittedly, I happen to be the only occupant during my brief stay. But it's hard to imagine the noise ever rising above the peculiar sound of the sea booming in sunken grottoes, even when the place is full. The resort squats on a promontory, and the cliff below is riddled with deep natural caves. Blackwell has helpfully landscaped stone tables and chairs in these winding chambers, so you can sit on ledges at the edge of the caves and watch the waves roll into the dark. Inspired place for a candlelit dinner.

My room is a circular thatched hut, with a four-poster bed nicely swathed in mosquito netting. The shower is outside, concealed by a discreet bamboo wall but open to the sky. I could get used to showering beneath the stars. I feel as if I am starring in a tropical shampoo ad.

The Caves, unlike Jake's, is posh, at a decent price (if $400 to $500 a night strikes you as decent). *Posh* has various shades of meaning in the Caribbean; at the Caves, it denotes a vaporous spiritual calm, with an almost New Age feel. You can imagine Clinton & Co. happily convening a Renaissance weekend here. You don't have to be athletic to negotiate the property, but the stairs built into the cliff open out into diving platforms; if you tire of the climb, you are encouraged to spread your wings and plummet into the sea below.

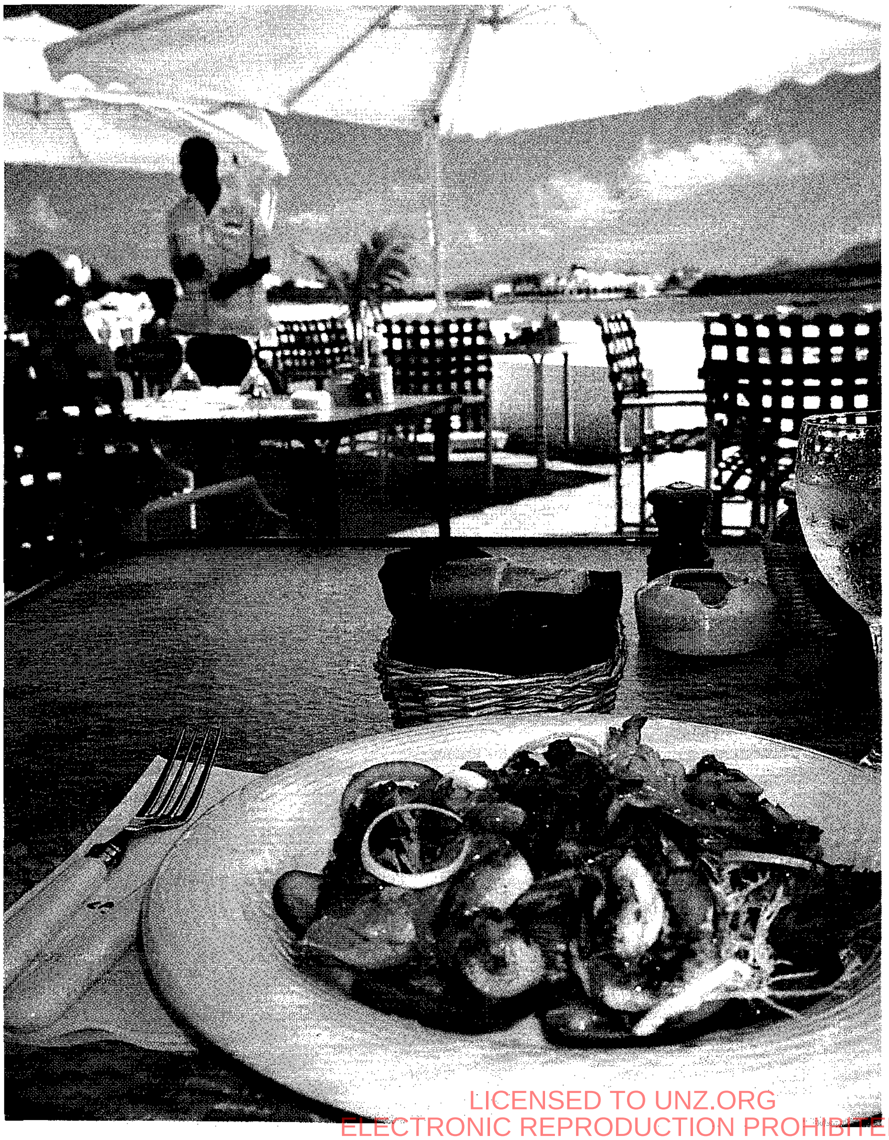
I do try out Negril, more than once. The Caves has cooking facilities and a chef who will prepare dishes for you, but no restaurant. Alone, I decide to leave the sanctuary to forage for dinner.

Rick's Cafe, a famous place to watch the sun set and listen to the Macarena at a sickening volume, is only a ten-minute walk away. I stroll past various unsavory characters; as I am carrying two cameras, I might as well have the words PALPABLE VICTIM tattooed on my forehead. A slick dude lounging by the side of the road offers to take me into a darkened wood to photograph a baby marijuana plant. I don't really want to photograph a baby marijuana plant; if he wants to mug me, he's going to have to come up with something more enticing. I proceed to Rick's, where my skull is split instead by a cheesy pop song. The food is worthy of the atmosphere—greasy, limp, and ordinary. Rick's sits on a cliff, and the local macho thing is to line up and dive from beside the restaurant into the water below while wearing the tiniest legal bathing suit. Idiots in bikinis egg you on. All very appetizing. The waitress takes forever to arrive, then shortchanges me.

ISLAND OF TANNED GOURMETS

Anguilla, my next island, is quite difficult to reach from Jamaica. I have three-hour stopovers in both Miami and San Juan; I could be in Tokyo by the time my plane finally lands at my eel-shaped destination. (*Anguilla* derives from *eel.*) I know from island-hopping in Greece that you should always stay somewhere off the main ferry route. Anguilla proves just such a place. A dusty, flattish island, Anguilla has little in the way of scenery; it's not immediately impressive. What it does offer is a level of dining and accommodation that would not embarrass the Riviera, and perhaps the most exquisite coral beaches in the world.

CAP JULUCA A resort that caters to an obscure subset of the population—wealthy people with taste.

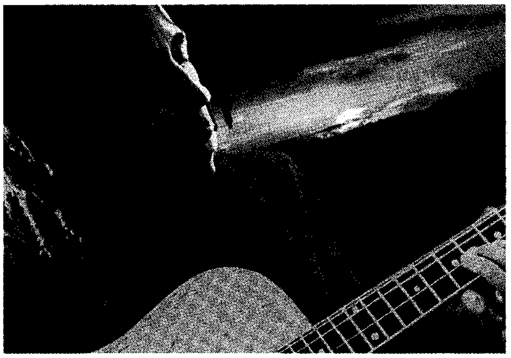


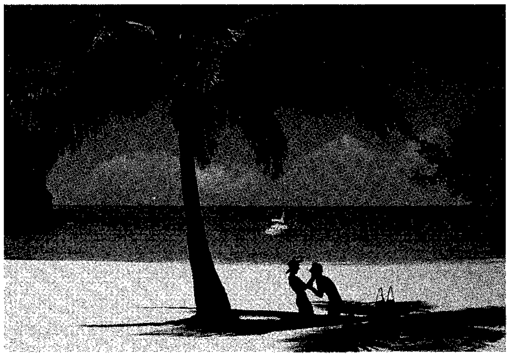
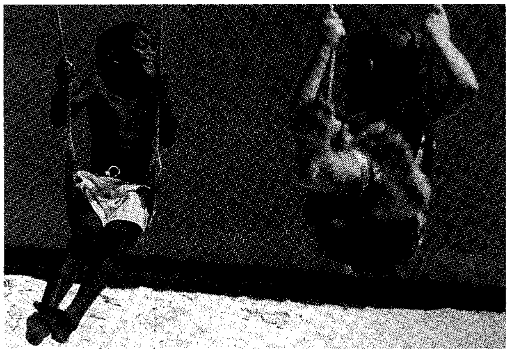
SHELLING OUT Dining at George's, a beachside restaurant at Cap Juluca.

My first resort, Cap Juluca, pretty much *owns* one of these beaches. It's not, technically, a private beach—very few beaches anywhere are—but the resort is so clearly exclusive that it actually manages to exclude people; it's as if an invisible force field deterred mere mortals who cannot afford a room there. I have never seen a beach like this: a perfect crescent, almost a mile long, of unpopulated white sand.

It would be hard to make the beach any more accessible to the rooms. The villas are laid out along the crescent, and you are encouraged to use the sand as your backyard. Every few feet a cooler full of bottled water rests in the shade, should the sun parch you (and it will). Various small bars serve more complex drinks; at any time, you can walk to George's, the hotel's restaurant right there in the very center of the beach, just off the sand.

No place like it.



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Cap Juluca caters to an obscure subset of the population: wealthy people with taste. The Moroccan villas, in white stucco with terra-cotta steps and mahogany trim, are designed to appeal equally to hedonistic Orientalists and heroic modernists. Each room has a balcony opening onto a lush garden; the doors and windows are louvered so you can moderate the force of the sea breeze that often whips up outside to disturb your expensive sleep. Programmatically, Cap Juluca replicates a harem, a labyrinth with chambers of ever-increasing intimacy. The innermost room—the Holy of Holies—is the personal bathroom, with a special bath designed for two recumbent travelers—a knowledge of the Kama Sutra would certainly enhance the bathing experience. The marble shower has a glass wall that opens out onto a private, enclosed sunbathing terrace. I know it seems odd to dwell on this particular room, but the light in this bathroom is numinous, and the floor area equals that of most hotel rooms.

Breakfast arrives mysteriously on my balcony. Included in the price of the room, breakfast is a fine assortment of fresh fruit and pastries—croissants, muffins, banana bread—along with juice and superb coffee. A tiny yellow-breasted bird arrives to clear away the crumbs. Briefly, I wonder whether it might be nice to be rich and to live like this always. After consorting with the privileged for a few days, I am quickly disabused of this fantasy. Why is it that I always come home from the Caribbean a borderline Marxist? I meet a moderately wealthy guest at Cap Juluca who complains that the Anguillans are not sufficiently servile. I am tempted to say: "Relax, buddy. Consider our good fortune. It's only through a wrinkle in the grand scheme that we—a penniless writer and a brute who by rights ought to be swabbing toilets—are being served by anybody at all."

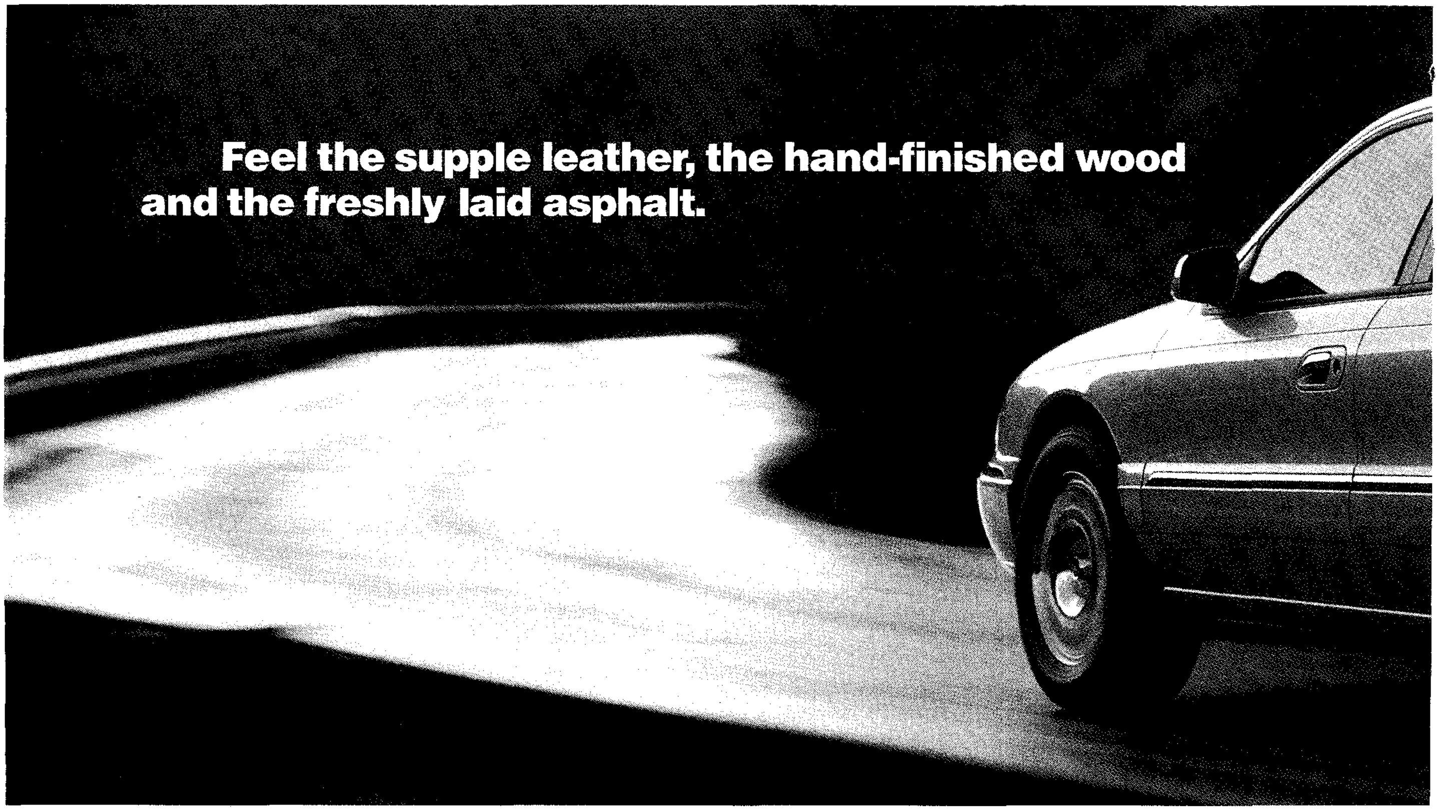
Moreover, the locals may well be the friendliest people I've ever met. I go to a tiny shop to purchase sandals, and when the woman behind the counter discovers that I'm off to Grenada, she gives me her mother's phone number: I should call, especially if I'm interested in purchasing spices. Also her brother, in case I want another friend. Oh, and her own address: I have to send her a card, to tell her whether I liked the island she used to live on.

CONCHED OUT At Scilly Cay, the pathways are inlaid with pink conch shells.

BEYOND CANNIBALISM

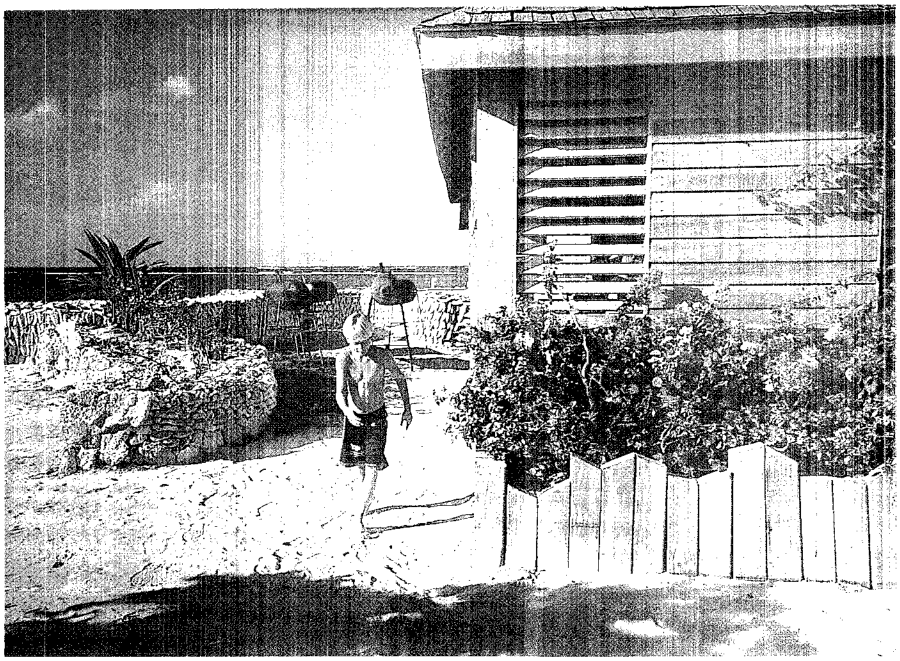
Anguilla, once the habitat of cannibals, has undergone something of a culinary transformation. Human flesh is no longer the plat du jour. You can find just about anything else, however, immaculately prepared. This is an island for restaurant-hopping as much as sunbathing.

The beach at Cap Juluca boasts two upscale restaurants. George's tries hard: The crayfish risotto is worthy of Coco Pazzo, the lobster "Tian" rich and intriguing; but the tuna, ordered very rare, arrives overcooked. The service is so kind as to be heartbreaking: Our waiter seems genuinely ecstatic to hear that we like the food—we haven't the heart to send the tuna back. In general, given the choice between crayfish and lobster on Anguilla—and believe me, you will be given this choice at least a couple of times a day—choose the crayfish. The crayfish down


Feel the supple leather, the hand-finished wood and the freshly laid asphalt.

It's difficult to say which sensation is the most pleasing in the newly restyled Lincoln Continental. Is it the feeling of being surrounded by plush leather trim and classic bird's-eye maple? Or the feeling of confidently carving your way through a favorite turn, with an

LINCOLN



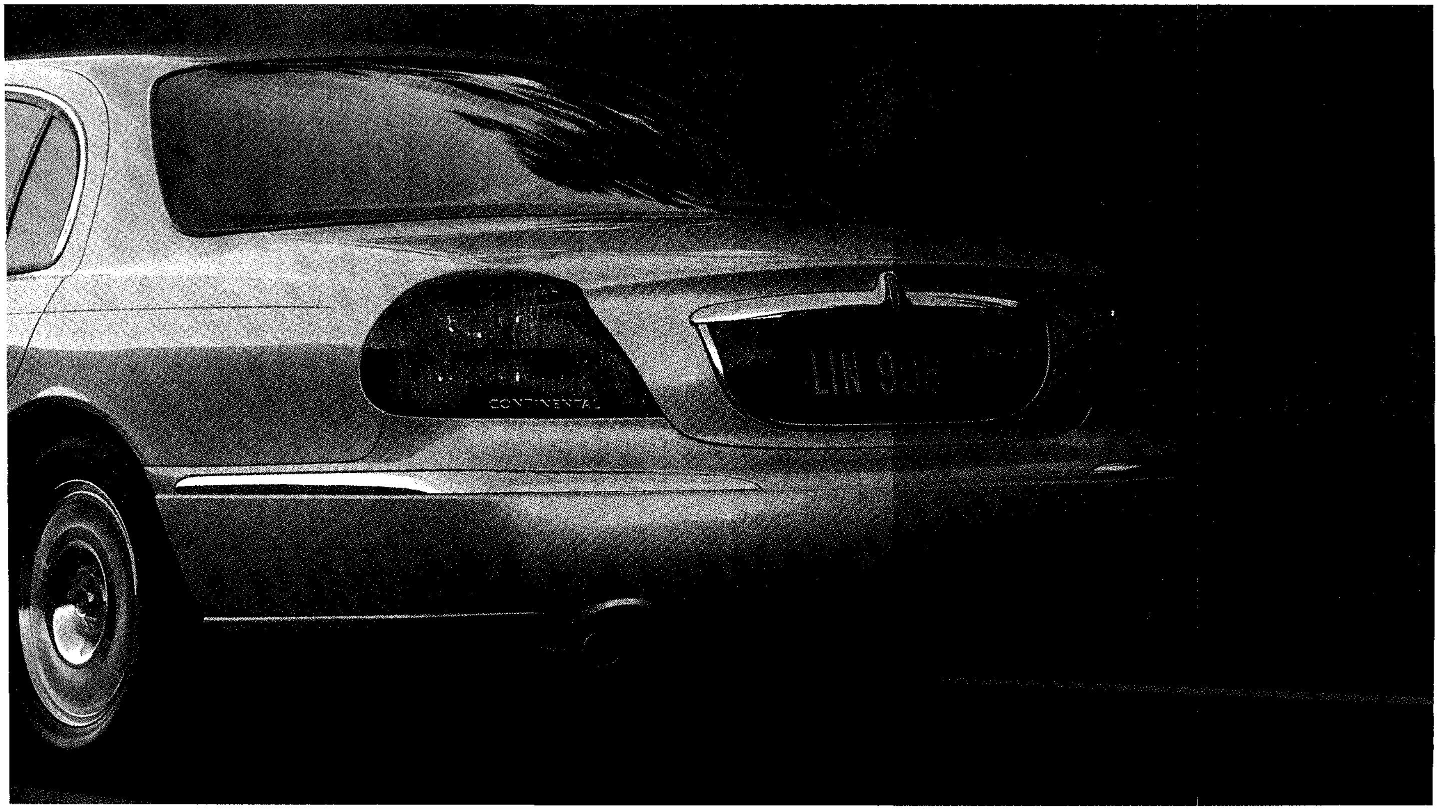
here are large and flavorful: the lobsters, small and flavorless.

Hollywood loves this place: Drew Barrymore is staying at Cap Juluca while I am there; the masseuse compares my body (unfavorably) with Arnold Schwarzenegger's; and at the far end of the beach is Eclipse (formerly Pimms) at Cap Juluca. Managed by the company that ran the defunct Eclipse in Hollywood, this Anguillan veteran has been subject to a whisper campaign of worried gossip: "Pimms has gone downhill. Have you heard? Such a shame . . . "

Well, the truth is that Eclipse has more than survived the changes in management. The atmosphere remains the most exotic of any restaurant's on the island. Eclipse at Cap Juluca is not so much on the beach as on the waves; while I am there, lights filtered blue by the Caribbean send mysterious patterns across the tented ceilings of billowing white fabric. Eclipse takes the Cap Juluca harem motif to a glorious extreme: White arches span white columns, and between them, *faux*-Arabic/ Turkish/Persian furnishings await Peter O'Toole on camelback. Edward Said would plotz.

The cuisine seems to occupy a certain level achieved by most of the restaurants on the island, call it *haute* middlebrow. The menus in Anguilla have in common a bizarre trendiness, the combination of local ingredients—primarily seafood—with pan-Asian flavors. This does not seem to have arisen out of the expected demographic forces; i.e., there hasn't been a huge influx of Thai or Chinese chefs to Anguilla. Rather, the island has been strong-armed into fusion cooking by the culinary mafia that migrates every year from New York; Americans seem to enjoy forcing foreign restaurants to attempt our current favorite ethnic cuisines.

I look forward to Blanchard's, which has an international reputation. The Blan-



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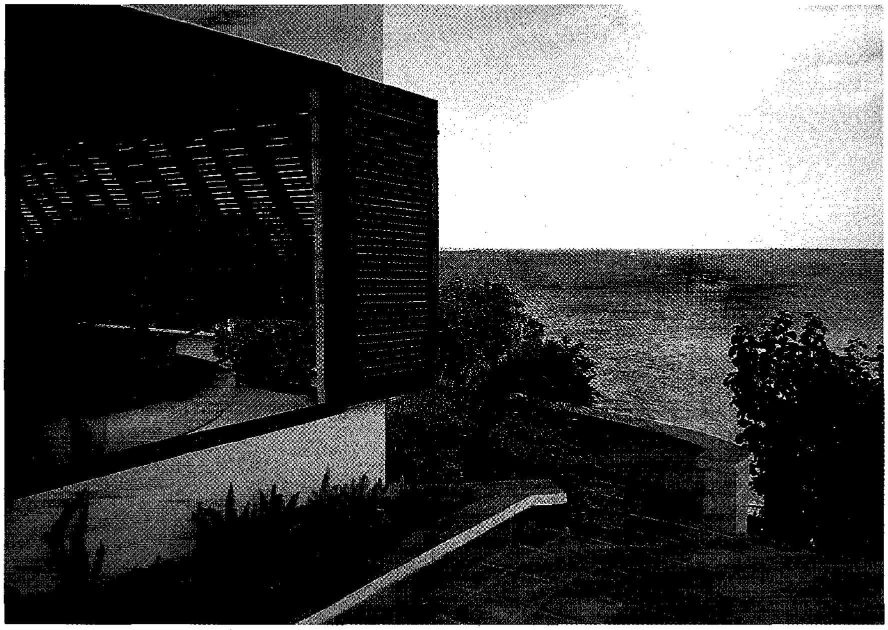
The new Continental from Lincoln. What a luxury car should be.

chards, husband and wife, founded a famous salad-dressing concern in Vermont, and their restaurant has the ambience of an upscale dining room in Santa Barbara: informal yet slightly snobbish. Teal-blue shutters open onto the Caribbean. The sea isn't quite the same presence here as it is at Eclipse, where you expect the tide to lap at your table at any moment, but the atmosphere is pleasant and airy.

The gazpacho is a promising appetizer, tomatoes and peppers diced rather than puréed, and enhanced with dill and freshly squeezed lemon juice. I have the lobster, which, as I noted above, is an unfortunate choice. The treatment is ambitious: Blackened cajun-style, and served with sweet potatoes, the meat can't rise above its inherent blandness. The jerk shrimp, basted with ten spices, is extremely spicy—Mr. Blanchard has warned me—and more interesting. It comes with a side of bananas grilled with cinnamon and rum. Still, given the hype, we do not come away overwhelmed; it's a fine restaurant but not clearly superior to the others on the island.

MALLIOUHANA Those accustomed to the faded luxe of a London club will feel right at home.



THE SKY'S THE LIMIT By Malliouhana's main villa, en route to the pool.

Mango's is the restaurant formerly operated by Blanchard and Blanchard. It was eventually bought by a partnership that had the good fortune to have its new purchase swept away by Hurricane Luis before having the opportunity to serve a single meal. The new Mango's is less prepossessing physically than Blanchard's, but the food is just about as good. The conch chowder is decadent, the snapper fresh and available several ways; with an entire island kowtowing to Asiatica, I order an impeccable fillet, grilled in soy sauce and sesame oil. The casual atmosphere is winning: Cuban cigars are offered at a small mark-up; the tropical drinks are exquisitely silly (including a killer chocolate colada), and you could throw a bun and hit the beach, it's so close.

Set aside an afternoon for lunch at Scilly Cay, a restaurant just offshore that occupies its own island. It's easy to get to Scilly Cay: Have a taxi drive you to Island Harbour and wave for the boat to pick you up. The walls lining the paths about the island have been inlaid with thousands of pink conch shells: Conch fishermen generally throw the shells away once they've extracted the meat, but the owner of Scilly Cay induced them to deposit their shells on the island in return for free drinks. I meet the Blanchards at Scilly Cay, and they insist that I order the curried-lobster-and-chicken platter. This is the only place on Anguilla—perhaps the only place in the Caribbean—where you *must* have lobster; it is superb. The soundtrack to lunch is provided by a resident band of reggae players, the Happy Hits. Though everybody may be sitting around eating in bathing suits, that doesn't mean Scilly Cay is cheap. But then, nothing on Anguilla is. You will pay around $50 per person, with drinks. Dining in Anguilla is, in short, very much like dining in Manhattan, except that the water's more impressive, and warmer. I've never heard so much gossip about the Hamptons. Ever. Anywhere. Certainly not in New York.

MALLIOUHANA

I think it is safe to say the limbo has never been danced at Malliouhana. Where Cap Juluca appeals to sybarites, Malliouhana caters to the traditionalists: gourmets and oenophiles in particular. Some will find the atmosphere stodgy, but those accustomed to the faded luxe of a London club will feel right at home: Everything is a bit frayed around the edges, in a way you'd expect from an aging European establishment. Malliouhana is not very Drew Barrymore. Malliouhana is much more Kimba Wood. In fact, Judge Wood is staying there with Frank Richardson during my visit. The rooms at Malliouhana are luxurious but not palatial—something of a disappointment after the villa at Cap Juluca. But the dining room is legitimately famous as the finest in the Caribbean. Not simply fine by resort standards, but a restaurant that would justify the (ridiculous) prices even in New York.

Michel Rostang, whose dining room in Paris bears two stars from Michelin, designed the menu and oversees from afar. Jacques, the maître d', is a beloved personality who will cheerfully deliver an eloquent discourse on the wine in the cellar.

The chef favors fresh local ingredients where appropriate, but the chicken and duck are from Bresse, the lamb from Sisteron. The marinated-conch salad is a fine place to start; more typical—which is to say more flagrantly Continental—is the mille-feuille of artichoke and salmon with chèvre. Main courses include a hearty bouillabaisse special and a grilled fillet of snapper in an orange dressing with warm green onions and sautéed pumpkin.

Even here, you will encounter moments of generic Asian silliness, but the dining room is for the most part stubbornly French. No allowance is made for the climate: This is not light food; nothing *nouvelle* about it. At Malliouhana, you eat richly, and you can spend the rest of your time working it off at the resort's superior

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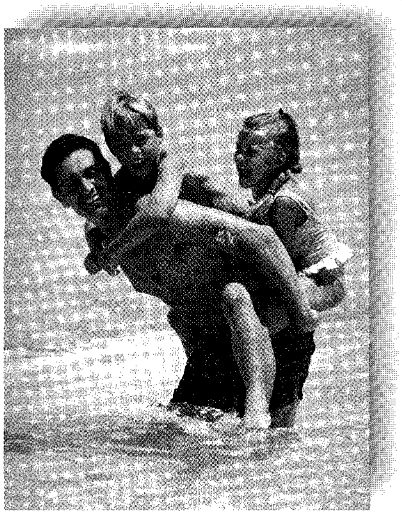

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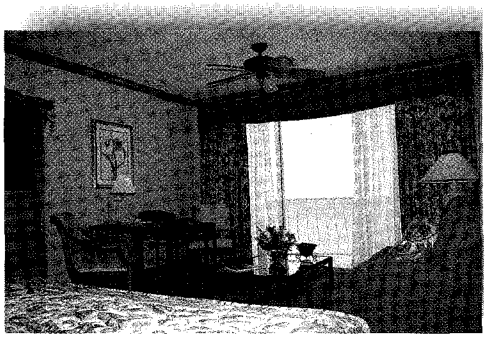

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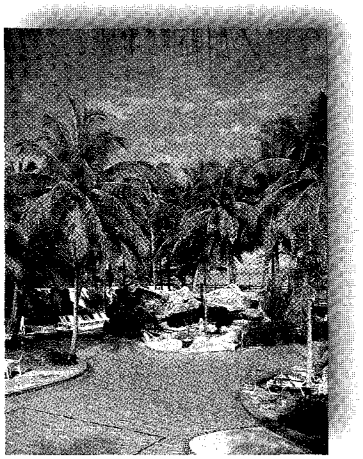

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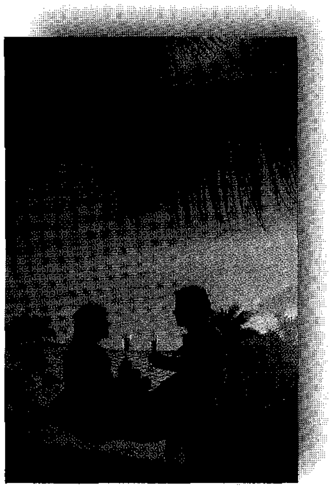

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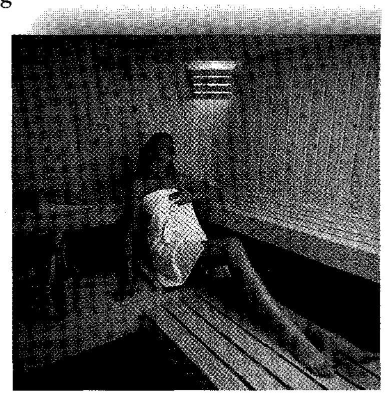

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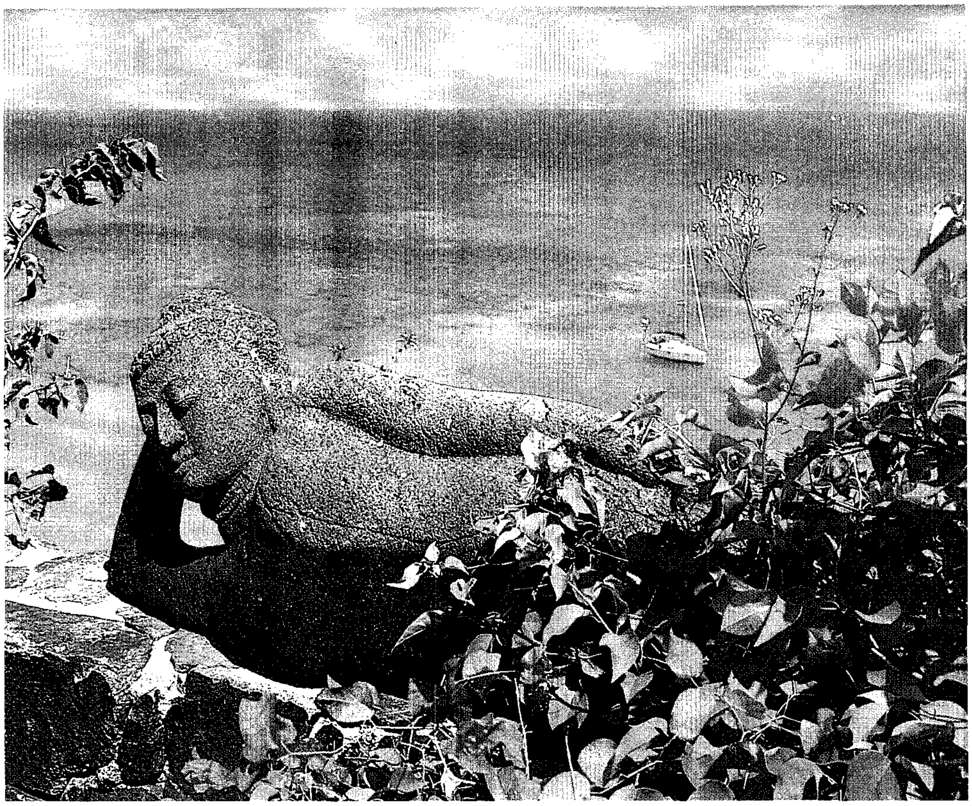


VIRGIN TERRITORY Richard Branson's balcony on his *very* exclusive Necker Island.

gym, which has a full complement of Universal machines and a view of the sea.

While I might be inclined, were I fabulously wealthy, to stay at Cap Juluca but dine at Malliouhana, the club does trump the harem in certain details. The gym is vastly preferable. The landscaping, including an entry arcade of potbellied palms, has a colonial grace missing from Cap Juluca's hypermanicured environs. But the beach is merely ordinary and at a far remove from most rooms, and the suites at Cap Juluca are more opulent. A couple can expect to spend $1,000 a night at either place, once meals are taken into account.

Really, a choice between these two resorts, both of which routinely make prestigious top-ten lists worldwide, depends very much on what kind of vacation you intend to have. At Malliouhana, you get the sense you belong to a country club: The maître d' knows your name; when you return for the sixth time, you can kiss him on both cheeks. And you won't be intimidated by the cult of youth and beauty, as you may be at Cap Juluca, where the sight of the masseur jogging on the beach—a musclebound professional cricket player in a microscopic Speedo—might be hard on the self-image of a gracefully aging gentleman.

NECKER ISLAND

Its sheer hubris is a treat. I don't see why Branson didn't just buy the island of Bali.

CHEZ RICHARD

Let's say you're not easily satisfied. Let's say, for instance, that a capacious apartment overlooking Central Park is not your idea of luxury. Perhaps you're the sort of person who has to own both the capacious apartment and Central Park itself. Cap Juluca, then, may not be enough to appease your territorial ambitions.

Have I got an island for you.

Richard Branson, the owner of Virgin Atlantic Airways, also owns a nice little island in the British Virgins—74 private acres—which he makes available for a modest fee to fellow billionaires.

Necker Island represents a degree of luxury and seclusion beyond anything available on Anguilla. Even at $1,000 a night, Malliouhana requires that you share the pool, the dining room, the lobby, with your fellow man. But what if you can't stand your fellow man? Well, then, for a slight premium ($18,000 a night), you can have Branson's entire island to yourself. Enjoy.

When you have your own island, it's important to arrive by helicopter. This way you can do a brief aerial tour of the terrain before disembarking and—if necessary—flush out squatters and paparazzi. My current liquidity crisis—all twelve of my dollars are tied up in stock—precludes my renting Necker solo, so I arrive in a chopper crammed with travel writers. Even on a subsidized junket, however, Necker Island makes you feel sort of special.

The sheer hubris of the place is a treat. Branson wanted a consistent Balinese theme—difficult to achieve with local furnishings—so he sent a British architect on an expedition to collect stuff. Lotsa stuff. Stone figurines, weighty Balinese chairs and tables, a few ceilings. The main roof beam, three tons of hardwood, was shipped from Brazil. Three guest houses were constructed in *echt*-Balinese-style, and the property was landscaped so that thatched pavilions would blend in with the environment. Branson sensitively blasted the top off Devil's Hill and used the resulting debris to build the main house. I don't see why he didn't just buy the island of Bali. Would have saved him a lot of trouble.

On Necker, 24 guests can sleep in comfort—okay, in obscene decadent ecstasy—most of them in the lavish main villa. It has ten bedrooms beneath its weighty roof beam, including a master bedroom with private Jacuzzi. The pool beside the villa is built right on the lip of a precipice, fostering the illusion that there is nothing to prevent the water from spilling into the sky. A large, irascible parrot presides over the pool table; the bar is stocked with fine single-malts and vintage port.

Your room will have a balcony, unless you're in the master bedroom, in which case you will have a full terrace. The bedrooms feature luxurious four-poster beds, Balinese fabrics, coral fans, and private stone grottoes in which to shower. The initial interior-design team was Balinese; when Branson made recent additions, he sent his California designers to Bali to soak up the ethos, which they did nicely.

We meet Mark and Joanne Netherwood, a cultivated Australian couple who specialize in the management of islands for billionaires. They cut their teeth on Double Island, which belongs to Janet Holmes á Court, the richest woman in Australia. Now they are the keepers of Necker. The Netherwoods are magnificently laid-back, especially Mark, in his flowing mane and bleached-cotton ashram chemise. And yet the place seems to run with greased efficiency. It helps that there is generally one staff member per guest.

Also essential is Scott Williams, the head chef. Branson poached him from

RESORT WHERE

JALOUSIE NATURE

Hilton plans to offer a spa to meet the exacting standards of Al Gore. Having bought Jalousie on St. Lucia, the chain will reopen it this year, promising the most ecologically and spiritually correct resort in the Caribbean. A full-service spa is rare in this region; the Hilton will be the largest and will propitiate the gods with "treatments utilizing indigenous ingredients from the local rain forest." Rooms from $250 to $600, without meals. Call 800-HILTONS. Opens December 1997.

BARGAIN SPA

Also on St. Lucia is LeSport, an all-inclusive resort run by the same people as La Source in Grenada, and with a similar ambience. The food is superior to the cuisine at LaSource, but it won't change your life; the bedrooms, although utilitarian, offer a view of the Caribbean. A good choice if you want an active vacation, LeSport offers fencing, golf, Tai Chi, and scuba. Also thalassotherapy, which involves rubbing you in seawater. LeSport is less posh than Jalousie, but its package deals can be a bargain. Rooms are $225 to $295, all-inclusive. Call 800-544-2883 or 758-450-8551.

EURO-FABULOUS

The K Club was founded by high-living Italians whose ostentatious behavior made them unwelcome at Barbuda's Coco Point hotel (Yankee, buttoned-down, disdainful). Their revenge? A $30 million resort at the opposite end of the beach from Coco Point. Which is not to say that the K Club is rowdy; it's simply lavish, and *very* Italian. *K* is for Krizia, the fashion marque; the owners of the K Club are also trendsetting designers in Milan and have decked out the resort in their signature colors, teal and milk. Is it the most expensive resort in the Caribbean? It certainly hopes so. The K Club officially arrived in 1990 with Giorgio Armani and his entourage, and the design is worthy of Armani—clean and restrained (lest those brutes at Coco Point confuse ostentation with vulgarity). Room rates? If you have to ask, you can't afford to stay there. Well, okay: Off-season, the cheapest room is $500; a beach villa during the high season is $2,700. Call 800-223-6800.

NETS TO YOU

Rivalry between the two best tennis resorts in the Virgins, the Buccaneer on St. Croix and Wyndham Sugar Bay Beach Club & Resort in St. Thomas, ensures that anyone from a tyro to a pro can achieve sunstroke at either one. The Buccaneer is older and features eight Laykold courts, two lit at night, and an on-site tennis pro. Also a modest golf course and three beaches. Sugar Bay is less well endowed in the beach department but has the first stadium tennis court in the U.S. Virgins (bring spectators!); all seven Laykold courts are lit at night. Rooms at the Buccaneer range from $210 to $375 for a double, including Continental breakfast; call 800-255-3881. Wyndham Sugar Bay is between $360 and $580 for a double; call 800-927-7100.

INTIMATE

The Horned Dorset Primavera, on the island of Puerto Rico, has the low-key ambience of a dining club. The fare is quietly famous—Californian-Continental fusion—and those who visit the Horned Dorset try to keep it a secret among themselves, recommending it only to close friends. They will punish me for writing this. The library is respectable; the mynah bird is fully bilingual. Rooms range from $380 to $540 (villas, $800). No children under 12. Call 800-633-1857.

CHILD-FRIENDLY

The Four Seasons Resort Nevis, a former colonial plantation, is not only one of the nicest hotels in the region but one with a day camp. Its "Kids for All Seasons" youth program is famously well supervised: Every day from eight until six, the hotel staff supervises crafts, cooking, sports, movies, and science and nature programs. Kids must be toilet-trained to participate; the camp is licensed to take in 3- to 9-year-olds. If your children are under 3, the Four Seasons will hire a local baby-sitter for you ($22 for the first four hours, $3 for each additional hour). Games, coloring books, high chairs, and bottle warmers are complimentary. Depending upon the season, suites range from $450 to $3,460. Call 800-332-3442 or 869-469-1111.

HONEYMOONERS

Built on a narrow piece of land surrounded by water on three sides, the Biras Creek Resort on Virgin Gorda is a good place to honeymoon. The only way to get there is by sea (you can trail cans and ribbons behind

BALI HIGH Bedrooms on Necker Island feature Balinese prints and coral fans.

the boat). You get to play Adam and Eve: private showers for two beneath strange constellations, and terrain that looks as if it were only recently touched by man. Nature trails abound. One former guest, Bert Houwer, was so impressed that he bought the place. You'll have to make your own entertainment, but given that you've decided to spend a lifetime with your traveling partner, he or she will probably keep you happy for a couple of weeks in this especially remote property. Suites, $350 to $595, villa, $600 to $795; meals included. Call 800-223-1108 or 809-494-3555.

PAIR-A-DICE GAINED

If you stay at the El San Juan Hotel & Casino, you won't have to leave the hotel grounds to experience the high life. It is somewhat remotely situated relative to the Old Town of San Juan, but it's close to the beaches, and a destination in itself. The El San Juan is the best hotel in Puerto Rico, and the price is commensurate. And whatever money you have left over from paying for your room you can drop at the roulette wheel: The lavish in-house casino opens at noon and closes at four in the morning. Built in 1958, the El San Juan had a $45 million face-lift in 1985. The lobby is a grand folly of red marble and mahogany paneling; the chandelier puts *The Phantom of the Opera* to shame. The beach at the hotel, 700 yards long, is the best in San Juan: vast and uncrowded. Rooms range from $300 to $1,500 (for the master suite). Call 800-468-2818.

LA BOHEME

If Jake's isn't your idea of bohemian living, how about an art gallery in the heart of Old San Juan? The Galería San Juan in Puerto Rico has guest rooms, and most of your fellow guests will be artists. Cheap and unusual, and you couldn't ask for a better location—a sixteenth-century neighborhood that includes the second-oldest church in the Western hemisphere. Painters use the central courtyard as a studio. Jan D'Esopo, who runs the place, offers a "portrait holiday." For just $3,000 (excluding room rate), you or your traveling partner go home with a clay bust or an oil portrait; book two months in advance and plan to stay a minimum of four days (though you get a reduced rate). Otherwise, rooms range from $85 to $300 per night, which includes a Continental breakfast. Call 787-722-1808.

Quaglino's in London. Williams arranges it so that the greater part of your day is a leisurely picnic. There is no shortage of casual dining locations. Lunch in the open air is a light buffet featuring a salad of marinated chicken, garnished with pine nuts, chili peppers, and lime juice.

Dinner, however, is where Williams flaunts his pedigree. The heavy Balinese table in the villa is set with fine linen and silver, and a series of courses gradually seduce diners into forgetting what hemisphere they're in. The appetizer, shrimp in a coconut batter and grenebois sauce, puts them in a proper multicultural frame of mind for the fresh mako shark, prepared in a Chinese fashion with watercress and bok choy. Dessert wines have been matched up with a Sambuca soufflé.

You can see why certain discerning misanthropes prefer to vacation chez Branson. The late Diana, Princess of Wales, for instance, once in line to assume the reins of a much larger island, settled for Necker. Spielberg has vacationed on Necker Island, as have Mel Gibson and Oprah. And me. I, too, am a soulful, monastic sort, and have decided that the Caribbean just isn't the same unless you have leg room. An entire island's worth.

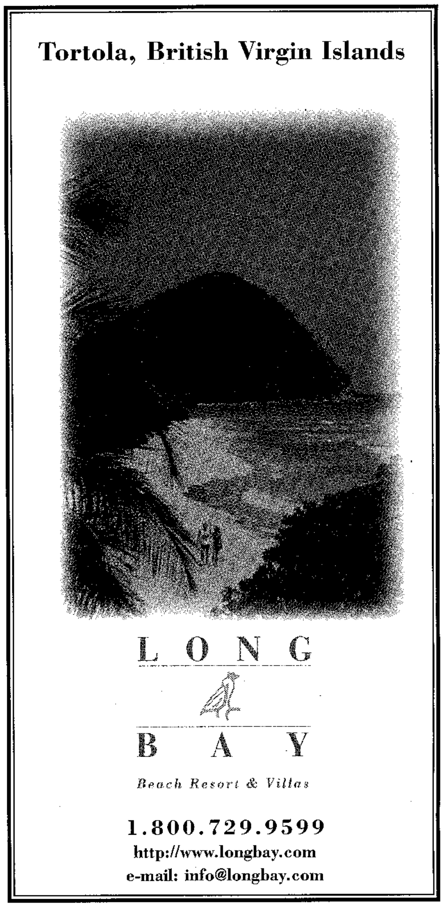
Have I any complaints about Branson's estate? Well, yes, I do. On the final evening, after we have dined beneath the stars and consumed numerous bottles from the vast and impressive wine cellar, a local band arrives at the main villa, and—this is hard to believe, I know—we are made to limbo-dance. I bet if you paid $18,000 to have the island to yourself, you could stipulate no limbo.

GRENADA REVISITED

The opposite of exclusive is, I suppose, all-inclusive. LaSource in Grenada is one of those resorts where a fixed price includes all meals, all drinks, and a dense program of daily spa treatments, exercise, and entertainment. I must confess that I am nervous about LaSource: A weeklong open bar sounds to me the sort of thing that draws noxious alcoholics from the far corners of the earth.

I am picked up at the airport in a stretch limo. My room is surprisingly elegant, with a dramatic four-poster bed of heavy mahogany, dark wooden shutters, and a cathedral ceiling. It's smaller than but very nearly as nice as my room at Malliouhana. The bathroom is relatively spartan compared with the luxury resorts of Anguilla but perfectly acceptable, and I have a tiny private balcony overlooking the sea.

LaSource covers 40 acres at Pink Gin



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Beach. The rooms are in long three-story buildings with pastel-colored walls and peaked roofs tiled in terra-cotta; the walkways feature elaborate mosaics.

If you're egregiously superior, you won't much like LaSource: It is a gregarious place, and it is far more difficult to avoid thy neighbor here than in Anguilla. I myself am humble and accommodating, and yet there are a couple of people whom I expend considerable effort circumnavigating.

On my first morning, I concoct my own creative muesli from dried figs and apricots, yogurt, bran, and wheat germ, then head off for my first-ever lesson in Tai Chi Chuan. It turns out I am the only student. My teacher, Pam, is the woman responsible for training all the massage therapists at the resort, and she is an expert at exotic methods of soothing the body and chilling the soul. She teaches not only Tai Chi but also hatha yoga, meditation, and advanced relaxation techniques. At 10:30, I take Pam's hatha yoga course. Both classes are held in a cheerful open-air pavilion.

By far the best thing about LaSource is the spa treatment. Your all-inclusive price includes a daily massage. Or a seaweed wrap. The most popular treatment is aromatherapy, where you get to decide how you're going to smell for the rest of the day. The oils they massage into your body have evocative names: Energy, Love, Relaxation, and Balance. Dinner conversation revolves around the crucial question of who laid hands on you that afternoon, and what mixture you chose. "I had Petra. Such fingers! And Energy is nice, but a bit minty . . ."

The service at LaSource is a riot, summer camp on steroids. The cheerleaders responsible for prodding you into perpetual motion are called "Body Guards," generally local young folk hired for their ludicrous energy. I ask Charlene, 21, how long she intends to work at LaSource. "As long as I still got bounce." Neither Cap Juluca nor Malliouhana could be described as bouncy. You could import bounce to Necker, but it is not indigenous. Jake's and the Caves are the very antithesis of bounce.

Too bad the food at LaSource is unremarkable. Healthy, copious, dull. Still, for around $300 a night per person, you can afford to dine out twice a day and still spend less than you would at a chic location.

When the bounce and the dull food begin to take their toll, escape for an evening to Canboulay, a restaurant perched at the top of a hill with a spectacular view of the island below. Canboulay is expensive; with wine, a couple will spend more than $100 here. But the names of the dishes alone are worth the trip: Bacchanal Broth, Kick 'em Jenny, Sweet Rosita, and Saga Boy Steak. I start with Kick 'em Jenny, flying fish with a puissant jerk seasoning—and progress to Sweet Rosita, a fresh swordfish steak roasted and crusted in pepper, then finished with a red-wine sauce and herbs.

The British planted most of what you see here—right down to the nutmeg and bananas—and as gardeners, the British are no slouches. Grenada is by far the most beautiful island I have visited on this vacation. Given that it is so close to perfect, why don't you hear more about Grenada? Well, there is the small matter of the American invasion. Because the world has a selective memory, Grenada is still associated with the bloodshed and dubious political events of 1983. As a result, the island has not been overdeveloped. American tourists worry that they will be treated badly. But Americans should know that they are well liked: Few Grenadians have anything but positive memories of the invasion. Many hoped that it would be followed by a huge influx of Yankee tourists with cash. This has not been the case; a significant proportion of the tourists, including those at La Source, remain savvy folk from the British Isles.

Grenadians are hospitable and have a mordant wit, especially regarding their own recent history. Their island is well off the hurricane belt, so the weather is much more predictable than it is elsewhere in the Caribbean: flawless, all year round. And oddly, despite the proximity of the rain forest, you are much less likely to encounter creepy-crawlies here than on many of the other islands: very few mosquitoes, no large spiders.

Spend at least an afternoon touring the island. The Dougaldston Spice Estate, in particular, must be seen. It is a ghostly remnant of a sprawling colonial spice farm. We are shown around by Rita, a tiny, ancient woman whom I initially take to be mute until she opens her mouth and delivers a remarkably eloquent lecture in a clear, practiced voice. Rita passes around samples of raw spice; she explains the uses for cinnamon branches and bay leaves and takes us through the culling of nutmeg and the processing of cocoa. We stand in an eerie and beautiful room that looks like a Joseph Beuys installation: hieroglyphic chalk marks on ancient wood, burlap hanging from wires, upstairs an attic full of bats. A sleepy dog scratches itself beside an ancient scale.

Later, we are shuffled off to the nutmeg-processing plant, the largest building in Grenada, and equally surreal. Vast flat pans are filled with various grades of nuts; burlap bags are piled to the ceiling; women sit in loose circles, grading the nutmeg and manipulating archaic equipment for shucking and sorting. The windows are bright with cobwebs, and everywhere, ancient tallies survive in cryptic traces of chalk on wood.

It's all very well to drift through the melancholy remnants of the colonial past, but it is time to wake up and return to La Source; I have made an appointment with a personal trainer.

Little do I know that my trainer will be the notorious Alicia, beside whom even Charlene is considered sedate. I am warned by Charlene not even to think about skipping my appointment: "You *know* that Alicia will find you."

Lord, does this woman have energy. Brutal. Alicia revs my heart up to the plateau just short of seizure, then straps me into the weight machines. "You feel comfortable with 90 pounds? Good." She ups it to 110. "You gonna live?" Delirious laughter.

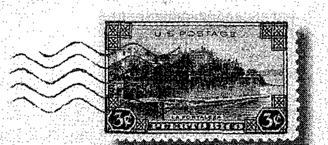
If Alicia weren't so adorable, I'd really think she meant me personal harm. I find myself writing down memorable Alicia-isms. "Don't let your heart be troubled." (This, just after she's sent your pulse yelping into the stratosphere.) Later, I take my first fencing lesson, and Alicia explains that "you need good posture, or you gonna lose big-time." She describes the opponent she whipped the day before: "It has a lot to do with flexibility and stamina, and I knew he had none of the two."

Fencing lessons are included in the daily rate at LaSource. Also included are volleyball, water-aerobics classes, and a comprehensive scuba program. Competent divers—I'm not—will want to visit the wreck of the *Bianca C*, reputedly the finest submerged wreck in the Caribbean. The *Bianca C* was an Italian luxury liner that visited Grenada in 1961 and never made it home; it caught fire in the harbor.

LaSource is a fine place to try things you wouldn't ordinarily go in for: I doubt I would ever have taken a fencing lesson in Manhattan. Mind you, there are some things I do not intend to try.

It is a balmy night, and Alicia is rounding up victims for the limbo dance. Slipping away requires some stealth. The beach is not lit at night, and they can't find you if you lie low in one of the beach chairs. In the distance behind me, I can hear hapless vacationers being driven like sheep beneath an ever-lowering bar. The music swells.

From the beach, however, it is a painless experience. By all means, go to La Source, but when they come to gather sacrificial flesh for the limbo dance, stock up on piña coladas and vanish to a nice remote place beneath the stars. Limbo involves lower-back pain and public humiliation, and you want none of the two. Don't let your heart be troubled. ■



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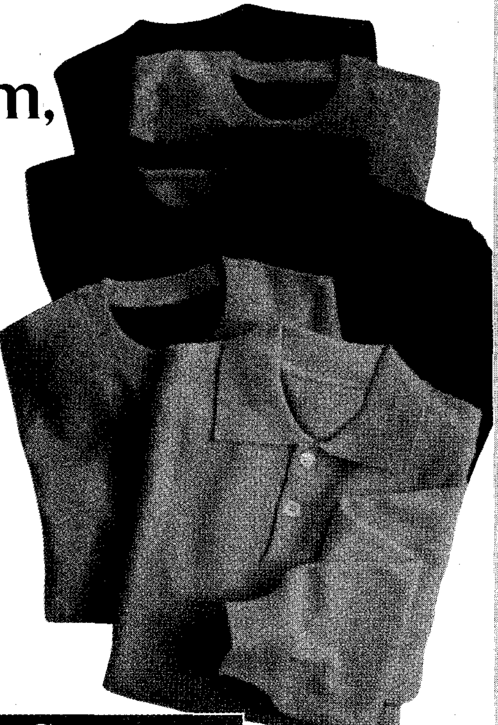

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MARTIN SHERMAN

Could the author of a Broadway play that's a gay-theater milestone be forgotten in New York? Well, it happened. But Sherman's new play and the movie of *Bent* are putting him back on the map.

By Matt Wolf

“I WAS REGARDED AS SOMEBODY OUT OF NOWHERE,” says Martin Sherman. “Everyone, I think, thought *Bent* was a fluke.” Sherman gives a half-smile as he reflects upon the opening that brought the Philadelphia-born dramatist his fifteen minutes of Broadway fame eighteen years ago. *Bent,* about the persecution of homosexuals in a Nazi concentration camp, expanded the range of what was possible in mainstream theater, and its star, Richard Gere, went on to more lasting fame. Sherman's smile comes with the recognition that a play that ran for 241 performances (and was nominated for a Tony) has achieved something like landmark status in gay literature.

His expression is coupled with the feeling that New York may have regarded *Bent* as an accident. “When my next play”—the Manhattan Theater Club's *Messiah* in 1984—“was done in New York,” he says, “nobody cared.” By that point, it hardly mattered, since Sherman had already moved to London. Six years later, after the disappointing local reception of his West End hit *When She Danced,* even his New York agency, ICM, cut him loose.

New York's attitude is poised to change this month with the Off Broadway premiere at the Second Stage of his 1989 play *A Madhouse in Goa,* directed by Nicholas Martin (*Full Gallop*); Judith Ivey stars in the dual roles of Mrs. Honey, the best Tennessee Williams part that Williams never wrote, and, in the second act, the middle-aged hippie Heather. December sees the return of *Bent,* this time as a bruising film starring Clive Owen and Lothaire Bluteau, which will open in time to compete for end-of-year awards: Theater director Sean Mathias (*Indiscretions*) directs Sherman's screenplay, the playwright's second, after his original script for *Alive and Kicking* earlier this summer, which will reach American movie screens this year.

Sherman himself has contributed to his relative anonymity. “I'm not prolific; I'm not a prolific playwright,” he says, having written just four plays since *Bent.* And Sherman's choice of subject matter is also distinctly unfashionable. Unlike many of his American colleagues, Sherman doesn't write living-room (or country-house) plays about his generation. “My life doesn't enable me to do that,” he explains. “It's not a mirror image of anything a wide audience would relate to. I don't know what living in a house in Fire Island is like; if I did, perhaps I would write that.”

Instead, his chosen scenarios are almost always in the past and tend to be situated at a specific, sometimes traumatic moment in history: the Holocaust (*Bent*), the Cossack slaughter of the Jews in seventeenth-century Poland (*Messiah*), Paris in 1923 (*When She Danced,* about Isadora Duncan), Cairo during World War II (*Some Sunny Day*). After a first act set in Corfu in 1966, *Goa* moves on to an all-too-modern time marked by AIDS, cancer, nuclear fallout, and the depletion of the ozone layer.

The fact that New York so easily surrendered such an obviously gifted writer reveals much about the culture. Says Sir Ian McKellen, a longtime friend who starred in *Bent's* London debut and in its 1990 National Theatre revival, “I believed what Martin always said, that he found New York uncongenial for a playwright. That's a dreadful condemnation for a city proud of its theater.”

Sherman declines to give his exact age, even if it's no secret that he is well into his 50s, and points to the ageism that can operate toward writers, especially once they turn to movies. (His 1994 script for *The Summer House* was nominated for a British Academy Award; his next script, an adaptation of Israeli writer David Grossman's novel *See Under: Love,* will be executive-produced by Mike Newell.) And though I point out that Arthur Miller received an Oscar nomination this spring, at age 81, for his *Crucible* screenplay, Sherman replies, “I bet he hasn't been offered any other screenplays.”

Actor Rupert Graves, an alumnus of *Goa* who first met Sherman during the 1984 London run of *Torch Song Trilogy,* remarks on Sherman's “slightly satellite quality—partly because he's so tall—he's kind of elusive, very hard to pin down.”

Echoes Sir Ian: “There's a lot about Martin that's very private. He's very astute about people, very astute about himself.”

That self-possession reveals itself in various ways: in his decision to move to London only after a Broadway success, “so that I would always know I wasn't coming for the wrong reasons”; and in his refusal to write gay plays per se, with the commercially unfortunate result that he remains a writer without a claque. “During all my plays, in previews, I search the audience waiting for my great gay public to come.” His findings? They don't.

The only child of Russian-Jewish parents (his father, age 90, stopped practicing law only three years ago), Sherman grew up in Camden, New Jersey, from where he would take the bus to Philadelphia to attend matinees: “I was the only kid in junior high school to have seen *Camino Real.*” Broadway was an annual treat during visits to an aunt in Washington Heights. “I hated school, so going to New York got me through the year.”

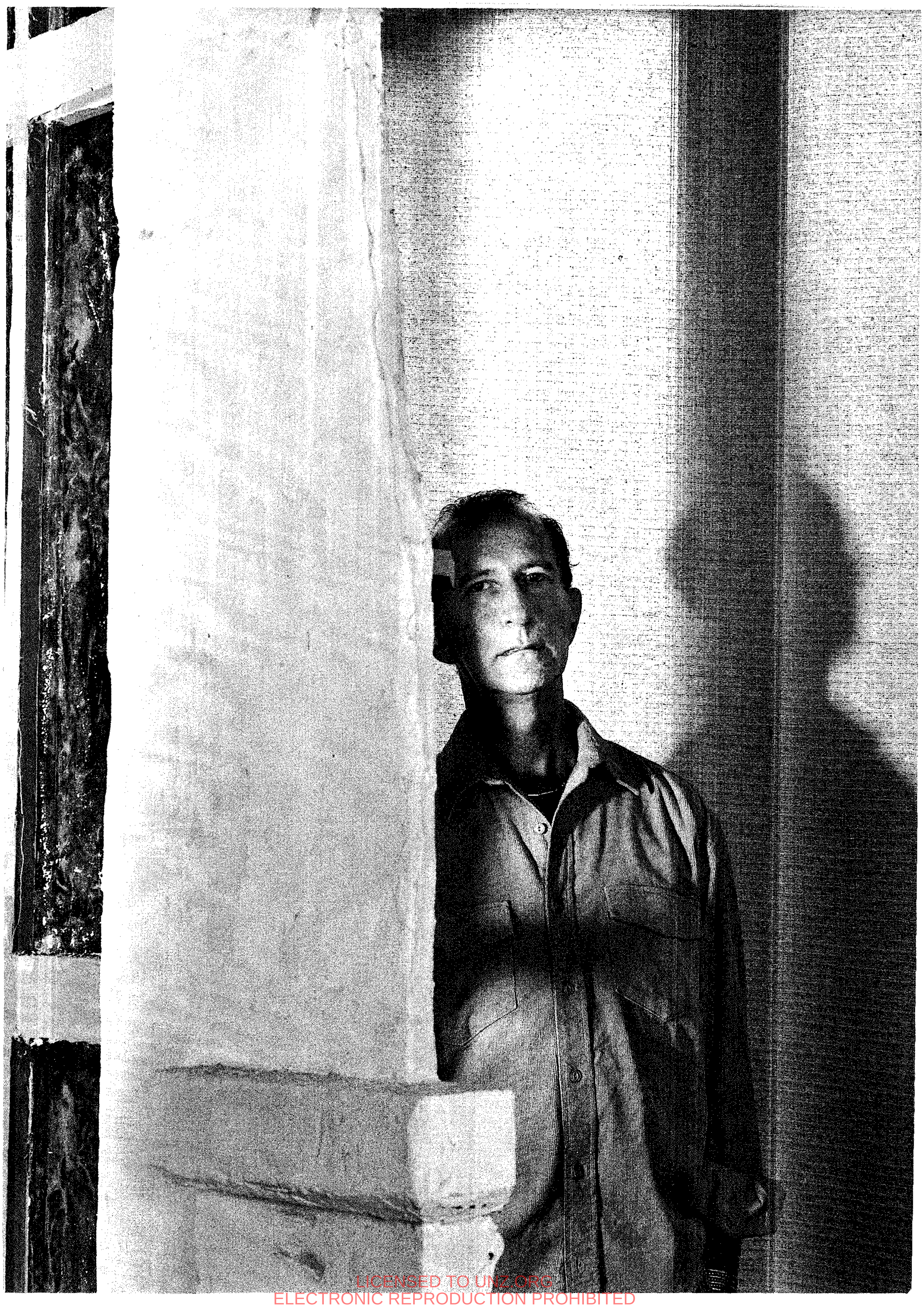
After college, he came back to the city. “I had hardly any productions at all,” he says, “and if I did, they were terrible.” But in 1975, a now-defunct London fringe company called Gay Sweatshop produced an early Sherman play, *Passing By,* to good reviews. The playwright saw it and liked it and wrote *Bent* for them, only to have the company's artistic director urge Sherman to “give this play to the world” and to a theater with real resources.

And so it was that *Bent* opened at the Royal Court and that eight months later Sherman found himself, a second set of good London reviews behind him, awaiting his Broadway debut with the same play on December 2, 1979. “I stood outside the theater feeling like Cinderella, watching all these stars going in. I didn't have a group of people around me saying, ‘Oh, Martin, this is wonderful; look, it's your opening.’ It was an absurd picture, rather isolated and isolating.” Now he heads once again to New York, at least for a while, momentarily forsaking the adoptive city where, says his friend Dena Hammerstein, a London-born, New York–based playwright, “you can have a career and prestige as a writer without having to drive a Lexus to go with it.”

“I've had plays done in New York,” Sherman says, “but this feels different.” Does that mean he's happy? Back comes the droll half-smile. “A New York astrologer in the sixties read my chart and said my life was going to be miserable for a long time and then it was going to improve radically years and years later.

“Of course, I was very, very depressed, but it's all true. I'm a late bloomer.” ■

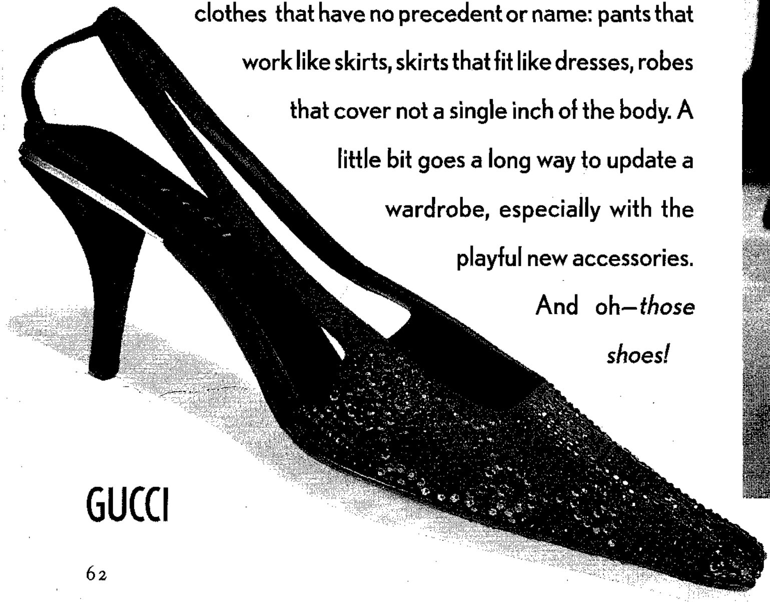
PHOTOGRAPH BY ALISTAIR THAIN



Europe's Flig

By Jade Hobson Charnin

This will be remembered as the season the European designers really cut loose. Literally and figuratively. ■ The silhouettes that had started, last season, to ease away from their recently airtight fit have become genuinely fuller and freer, allowing the clothes to bustle and billow as you walk. And designers, giddy with the arrival of some of the lightest fabrics ever spun, undertook wild experiments in layering and bunching—and kept going from there. Minimalism? Never heard of it. ■ Patterns got ever more complex, approaching the intricacy of couture. Pants got shorter; shirts got bigger; but skirts were the real news, and the fuller the better—pleated, wrapped, or petticoated. And the frilly touches that softened last season's hard looks blossomed into full-scale romantic fantasies. ■ Though they all delivered a few of their signature pieces, a lot of designers broke through with collections that resemble nothing they've done before, and some of the results—be prepared—resemble nothing you have in your closet. These are genuinely new clothes that have no precedent or name: pants that work like skirts, skirts that fit like dresses, robes that cover not a single inch of the body. A little bit goes a long way to update a wardrobe, especially with the playful new accessories. And oh—*those shoes!*

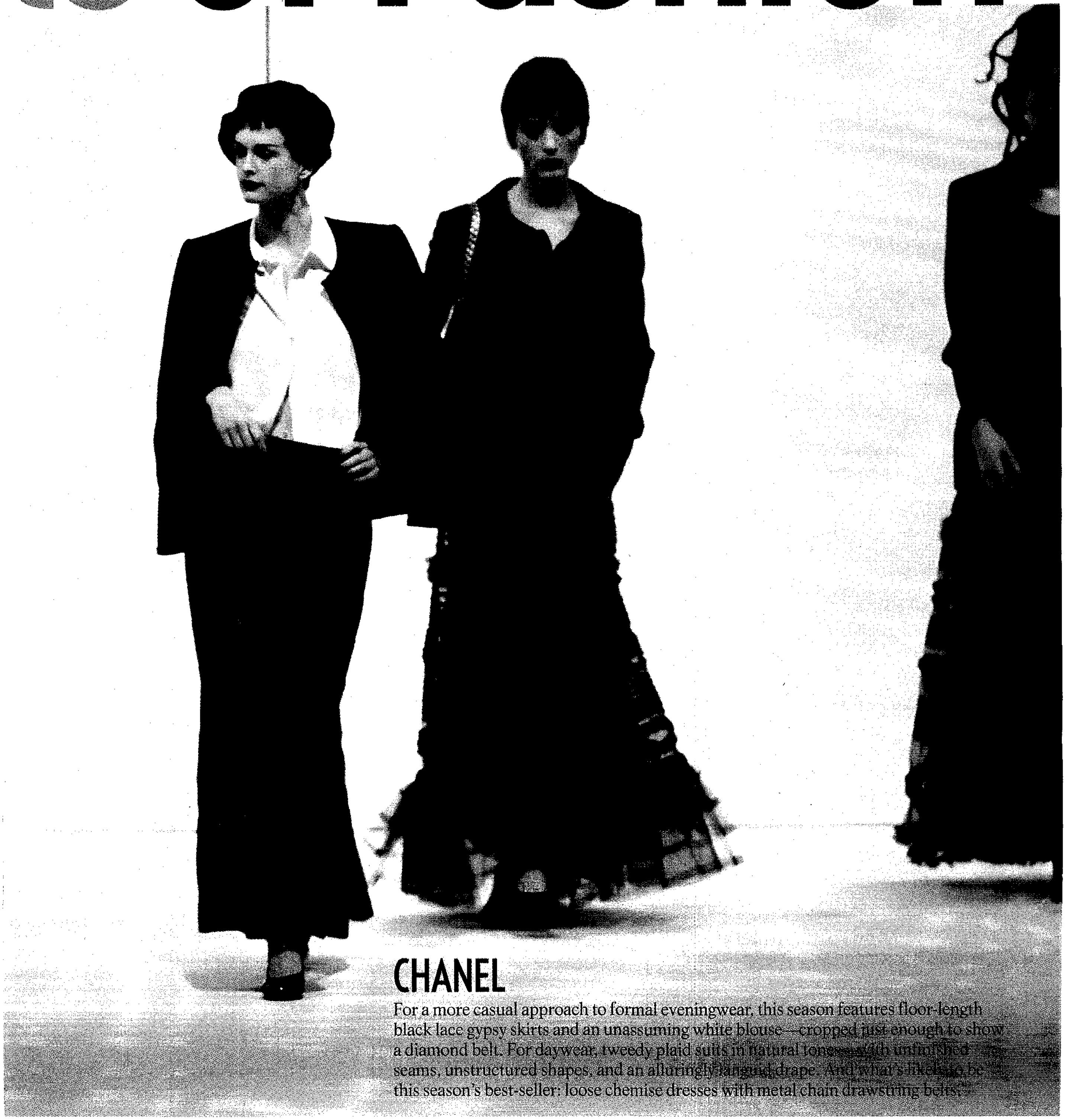


GUCCI

SHOES PHOTOGRAPHED BY STEVE WISBAUER.

SPRING '98 COLLECTIONS

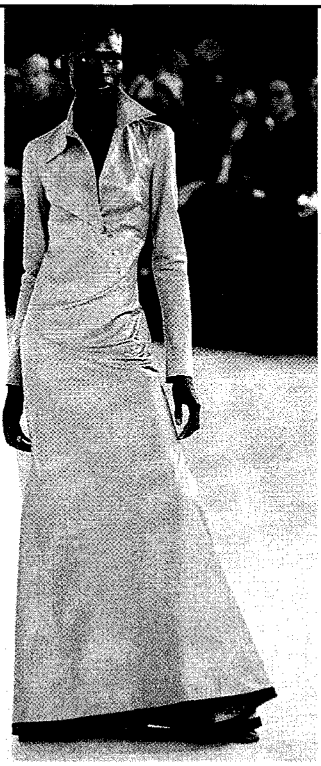
ts of Fashion



CHANEL

For a more casual approach to formal eveningwear, this season features floor-length black lace gypsy skirts and an unassuming white blouse—cropped just enough to show a diamond belt. For daywear, tweedy plaid suits in natural tones with unfinished seams, unstructured shapes, and an alluringly languid drape. And what's likely to be this season's best-seller: loose chemise dresses with metal chain drawstring belts.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAN AND CORINA LECCA



GUY LAROCHE ▲

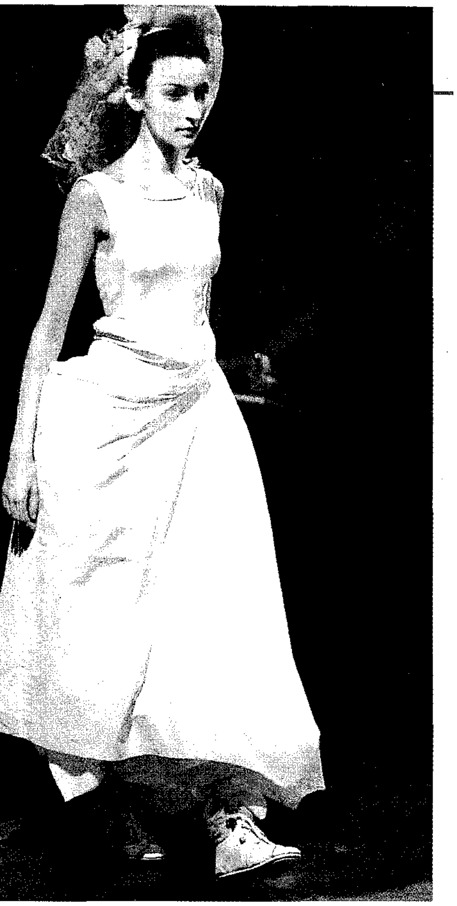
Alber Elbaz's second collection was a knockout: smashing clothes that work on the runway and off—all beautifully cut, as you'd expect from a disciple of Geoffrey Beene. A red leather coat paired with an apple-green leather mini, pale diaphanous dresses accented with tiny streaks of colored velvet, and stunning khaki evening gowns (pictured) are establishing Laroche as the favorite label for those living north of midtown but south of middle age.

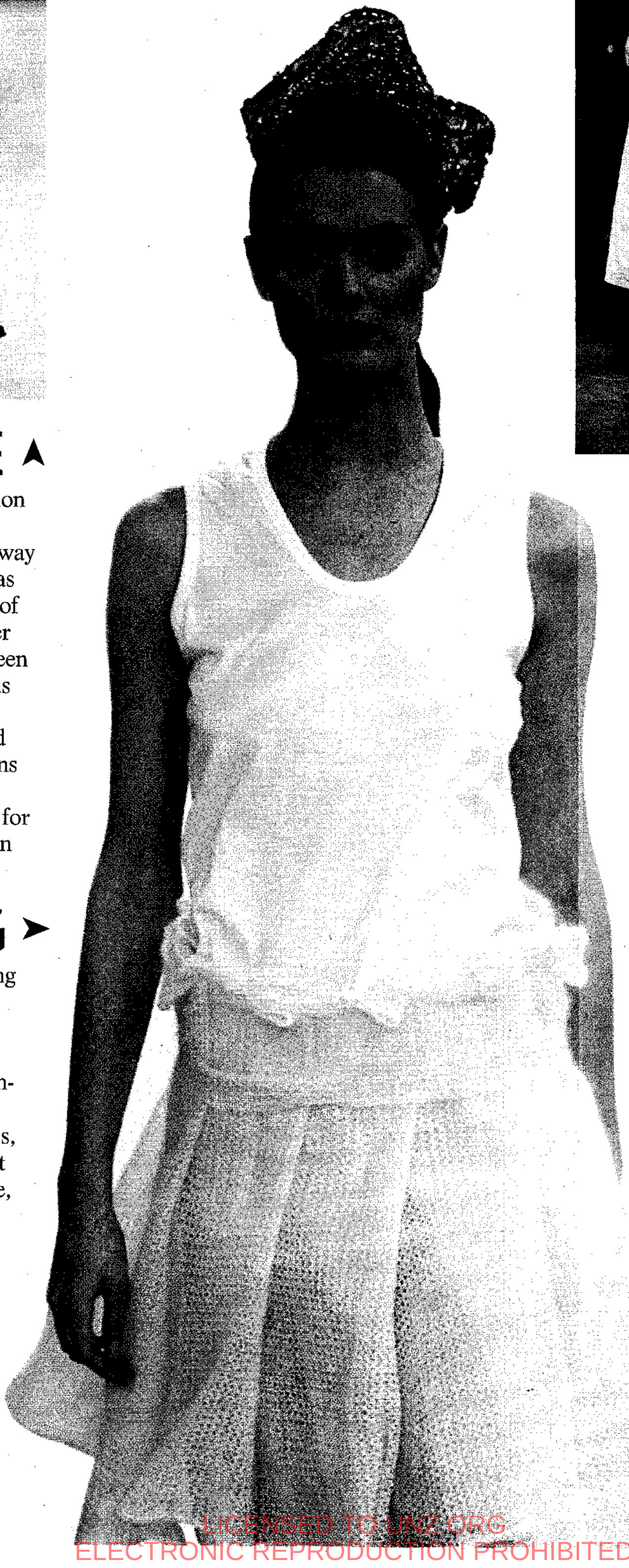
HELMUT LANG ➤

Long the critics' darling, Lang has acquired a commercial following (last week he opened a spacious store in SoHo) by translating his high-theory ideas into functional, wearable clothes. The serious, almost genderless pieces that are his signature are still here, rendered in new fabrics. But this collection also features looks that, for Lang, are stunningly romantic and pretty: antique-looking Moroccan belts, or short, gauzy skirts with big loose pleats that suggest Degas's ballerinas.

COMME DES GARÇONS ➤

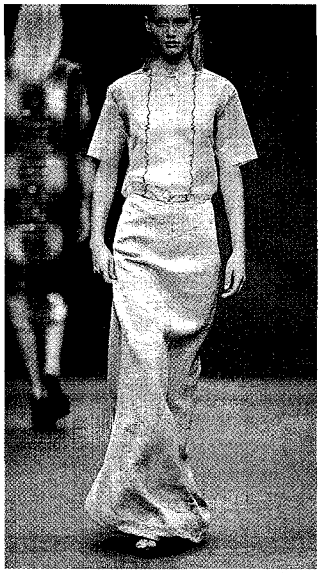
Coming off last year's wildly unpopular bulgewear (big stuffed bustles for the hips or bum: Did *anyone* expect they would sell?), Rei Kawakubo's new designs were just as experimental but far more beautiful. Layering sheer, muslinlike cotton as much as twenty-ply thick, so it drapes heavy as a carpet, she somehow built it into a ruffle and sent it all cascading down the front of a long dress.





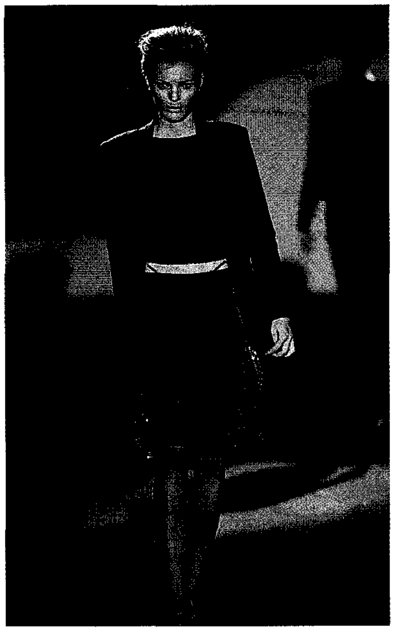
PRADA ▼

Miuccia Prada kept her many imitators on their toes again, this time with Mao-ish suits with cropped pants, sweet little tops and cardigans that hid Velcro-tab "buttons," somber block-dyed prints shot through with sparkly rows of beads, and roomy dresses and skirts made of heavy hemp or linen and finished with only a basting stitch. Rough and pretty came together in surprisingly elegant eveningwear that paired, maybe for the first time, hemp and satin.



JIL SANDER ➤

Sander never stops experimenting with new cuts and fabrics: By combining cotton, poly, Lycra, and nylon, she creates wholly new textures that transform her classic pieces and inspire some unusually fluid, decorative departures. A Mao suit was rendered in a glistening synthetic; intricately twisted dresses were made of something that looks for all the world like paper; and a boxy jacket was set aloft in light gauze or given weight in heavy black cotton.

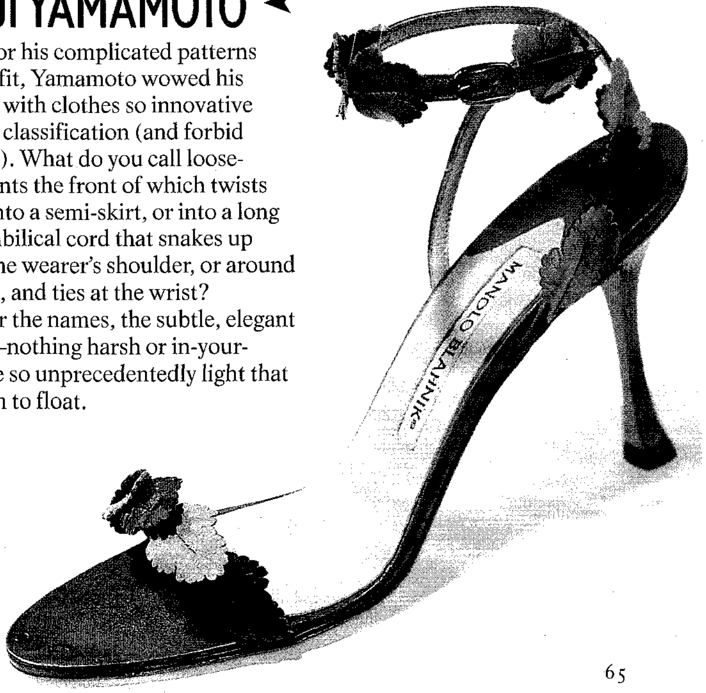


GUCCI ◄

Hollywood as ever, this collection showcased the company's new merchandising lines (most of it super-sheer underwear, and all of it bearing the double-G insignia) and characteristically sexy clothes—sheer jersey tube skirts, clingy column dresses, and body-hugging tops. Throw a jacket on for protective cover, and these can look as good on you as they do shrink-wrapped onto a bony model. For the more modest, Tom Ford also showed black wool coats lined in a galaxy of rhinestones, and sharkskin suits that would make Sammy Davis Jr. proud.

YOHJI YAMAMOTO ◄

Known for his complicated patterns and easy fit, Yamamoto wowed his audience with clothes so innovative they defy classification (and forbid imitation). What do you call loose-fitting pants the front of which twists around into a semi-skirt, or into a long quasi-umbilical cord that snakes up around the wearer's shoulder, or around her waist, and ties at the wrist? Whatever the names, the subtle, elegant designs—nothing harsh or in-your-face—are so unprecedentedly light that they seem to float.

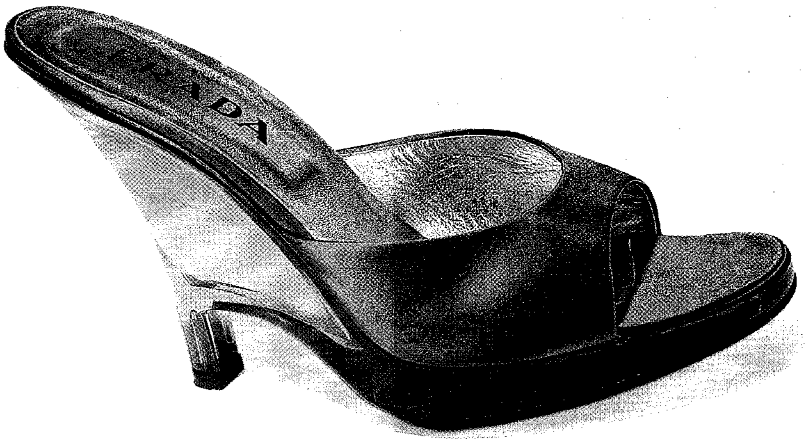


VERSACE ◄

After this year's tragic events, the content of Versace's show seemed almost beside the point—but the show did go on, and well. Staying true to her brother's vision, Donatella Versace featured signature fabrics like chain mail, sheer netting, and black leather in typically vampy, body-baring looks like plunging camisoles with teeny-tiny hot pants—definitely not suggested for trips to Key Food.

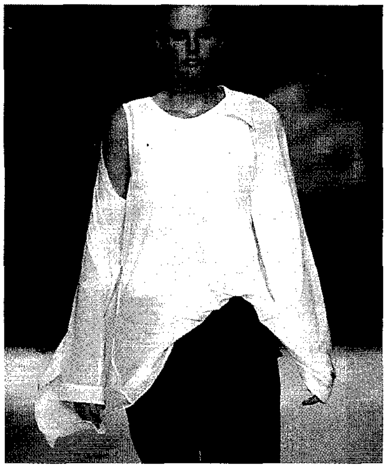
CHLOÉ ►

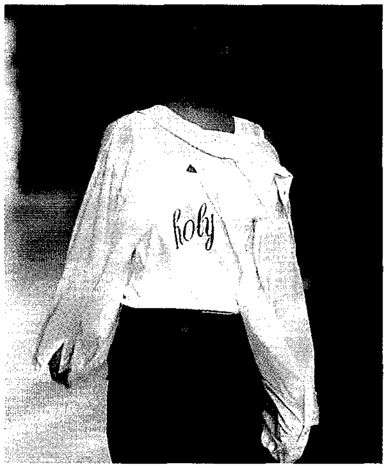
Last season, Stella McCartney's friends modeled her work in the hallway of her studio; this season, as savior designate of the revered House of Chloé, the 25-year-old played to sellout crowds. Returning to the label's original strength—pretty clothes—she showed perfectly made Prince of Wales suits with bright silk camisoles (matching lining), floor-sweeping skirts, and blouses with wide ruffles.



ANN DEMEULEMEESTER ▼

As in the past, Demeulemeester is more concerned than most with bodies—and budgets—of approximately human proportions. Her signature jackets and pants were here, as were more-experimental pieces so architecturally complex they're almost Möbius-like: here, the front—just the front—of a T-shirt stitched to the loose halves of a big blouse that's been split down the back and doubled over on itself. (Hint: You have to slide into it from behind.)





JEAN-PAUL GAULTIER ▲

Still the best stylist around, Gaultier showed wild combinations of tones and shapes that were nothing short of astonishing. Part Frida Kahlo, part Marilyn Manson, these outfits piled patterns upon patterns and colors upon eye-popping colors. (His trademark blue-striped T re-emerged as a vast but shapely sweater, spilling past the hips and over a similarly proportioned dark denim skirt.) Consumers will find these runway looks far too noisy for everyday life, but they can all be taken apart and worn as pieces.

ARMANI ➤

In one of his best collections in years, Armani showed beautiful lightweight suits—solid performers in classic cuts and men's-wear fabrics that will anchor a wardrobe for years. And finally bowing to the sheerer-than-thou trend, he threw in some peekaboo bodywear and even the odd bare breast. For evening, he showed organza jackets tied with satin obi sashes, and bugle-beaded chiffon gowns designed to look great as you clutch your statuette, blink back tears, and thank the Academy.

Fashion Editor:
Beth Shepherd

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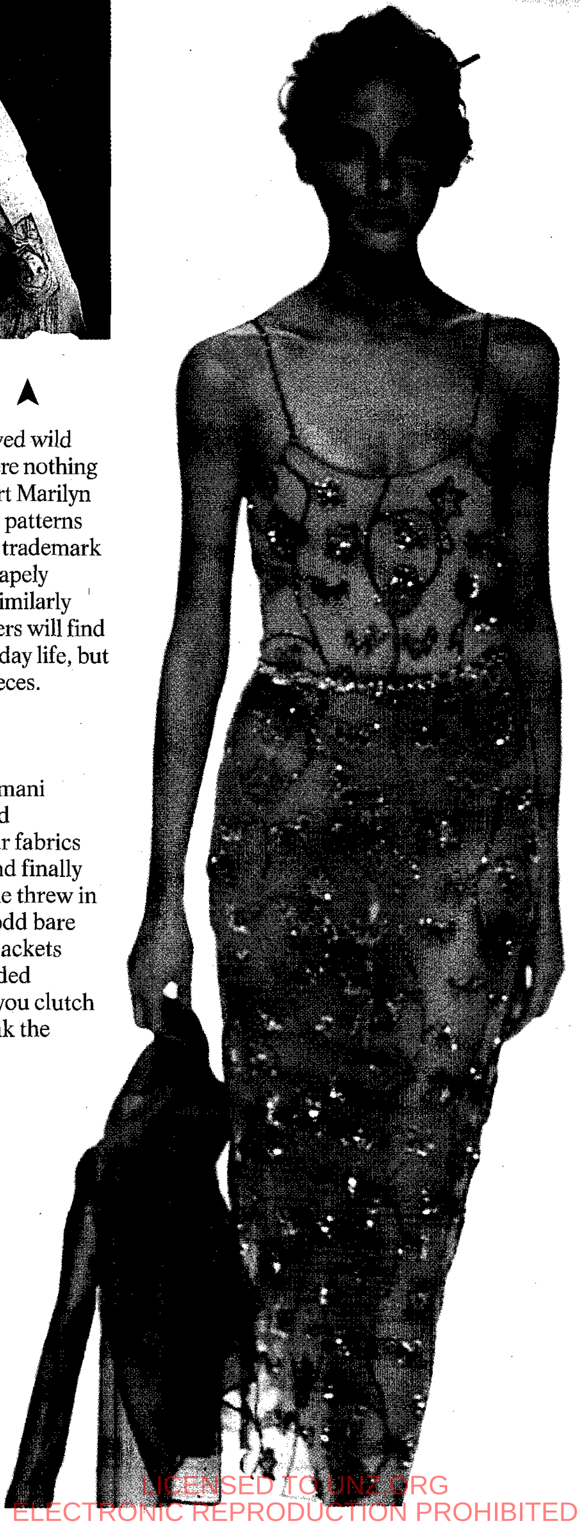
Ariel Kaminer

Fashion Assistant:
Janice Laneve

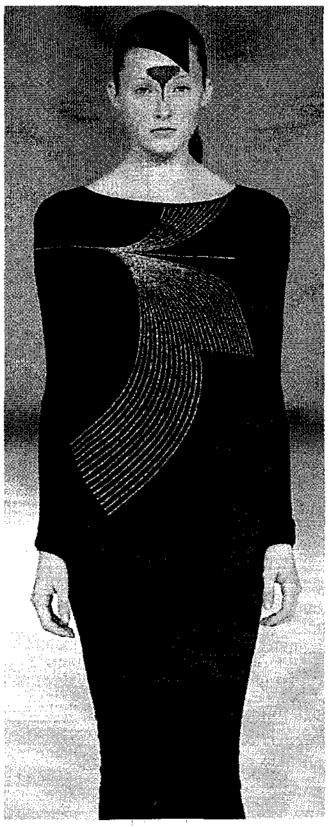
NEXT WEEK:
AMERICAN FASHION

DOLCE & GABBANA
MADE IN ITALY



HUSSEIN CHALAYAN ▼

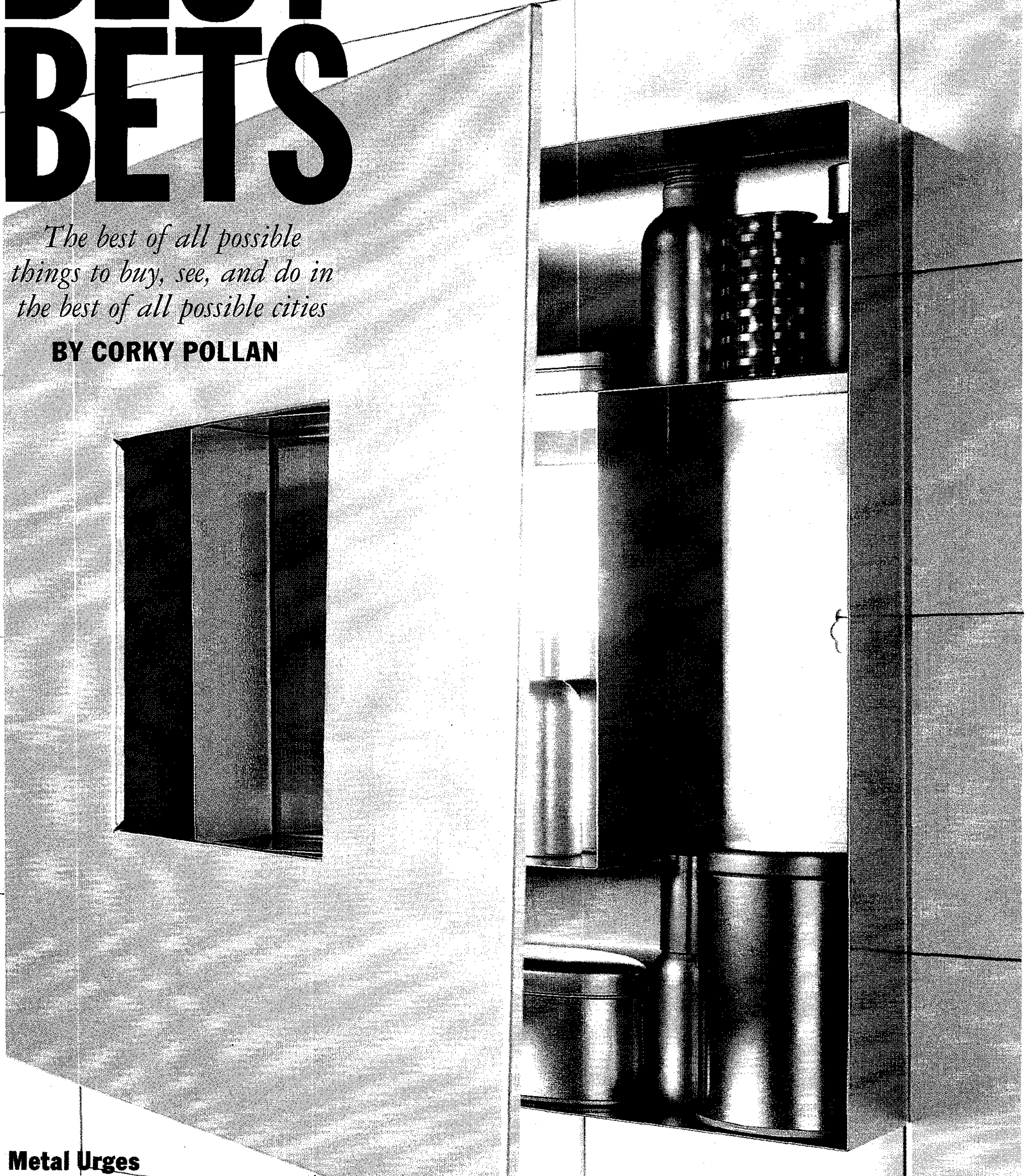
All of 27 years old, this Cypriot—staging his *eighth* collection—attracted considerable notice for his explicitly political references and highly intellectual conceits. (The show's finale was a series of chadors, rising in length so the first model was entirely covered, the last nude.) It's not for everyone: Many of his long jersey dresses bind the arms to the body, and the delicate jewelry chains that adorn them seem like beautiful three-dimensional cages for dress and wearer.



BEST BETS

The best of all possible things to buy, see, and do in the best of all possible cities

BY CORKY POLLAN



Metal Urges

Men at Work's medicine cabinet is well suited to the current vogue for anything shiny and metal. It's made in Italy of silver-baked enamel, the mirror is mounted inside the cabinet (not on the door), and the interior houses an intelligent arrangement of short and tall shelves ($275).

MXYPLYZYK/*125 Greenwich Avenue, near 13th Street/989-4300*

Blade Walker

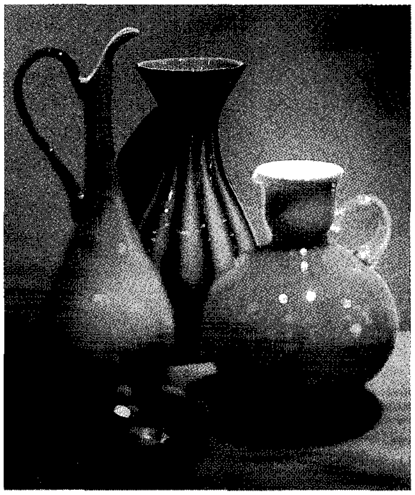
With Rossignol's new in-line skates on your feet, you can ignore those NO SKATES ALLOWED signs. Just detach the aluminum frame and they morph into soft rubber-soled shoes. Our in-house tester gave the Rossignol Traffic 70 high marks, though he judged the skates not the *absolute* best and the shoes a tad heavy for all-day wear. Yet no other skate comes close for sheer convenience: Think subway, stairs, and shop-and-stop cruising around town ($279.99).

BLADES BOARD & SKATE/*All locations/888-552-5233*

History Glass

The End of History is yet another retro furniture store, but what sets it apart—aside from its tease of a name—is owner Stephen Saunders's terrific collection of vintage glassware and his fairly low prices. Most of the pieces are unsigned fifties and sixties gems from Italy, Scandinavia, and America. The furniture is pretty much from the same period, but it's been recovered in fabrics that attest to Saunders's fashion background: jungle prints and pink and purple velvets (glassware, from $35 for a bud vase to $450 for an Italian hand-blown, gold-flecked glass bowl; furniture, from $300 for an end table to $3,800 for a sofa).

THE END OF HISTORY/*548½ Hudson Street/647-7598*



Aero Space-Engineering

With an Aero inflatable mattress stashed in a closet, kids' sleepovers, a sibling's overnighter, even in-laws' surprise visits can be handled with sang-froid. The Aero inflates in minutes (we tested), has a built-in pillow, and is made of non-allergenic, puncture-proof PVC vinyl. When deflated the mattress can be stowed in its own duffel bag (twin size, $129.99; full, $149.99; rechargeable pump included).

GRACIOUS HOME/*1217 Third Avenue, near 70th Street/988-8990*

Photographs: opposite page, Francesco Mosto; this page, clockwise from top, Francesco Mosto (2); Kenneth Chen.

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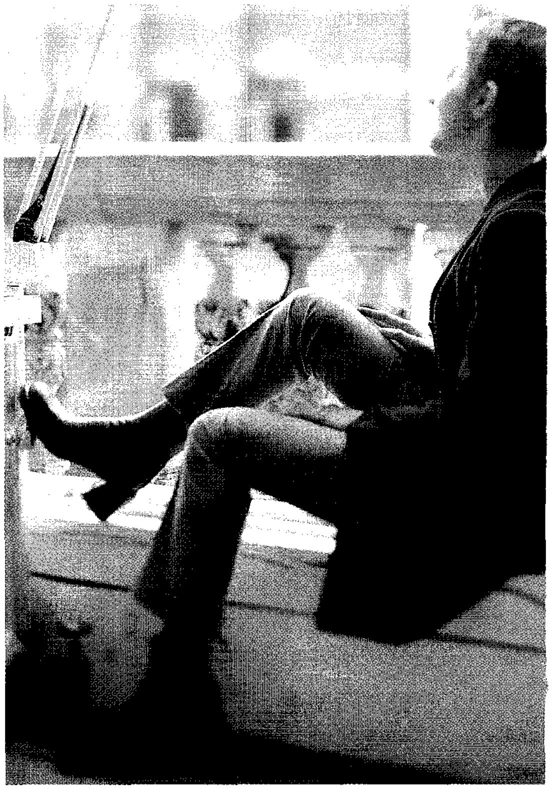
Annual Report

But **once a year:** *A thrift store brings out the good stuff, and Alessi holds its* **high-style tea party**.

MASSAGES ARE OUR PERsonal favorites in the pampering department—and when given as gifts, they're even better. Eastside Massage Therapy does a wide variety—Swedish, sports, deep-muscle, and medical, among others—at varying pressures. Sale prices apply to first-time customers only: One-hour massage, was $60, now $50; half-hour massage, was $35, now $30; series of ten hours, was $540, now $500. *Eastside Massage Therapy Center, 351 E. 78th St. (249-2927); M.C., V., checks; Mon.–Thurs. 10–9:30, Fri. 9–9:30, Sat. till 8, Sun. noon–6; 11/15–12/25..*



Must-Have **Chaiken & Capone, the master designers of the pair of pants that fit just right—not to mention one of the companies that made hip-huggers hip again—have them on sale. Retail $225, here $95.** ***Chaiken & Capone, 632 Broadway, near Houston St., fourth floor; A.E., M.C., V.; Tues.–Fri. 11–7; 11/11–11/14.***

Posh Purveyors

BENEFITING THE LIGHTHOUSE, A not-for-profit foundation for the blind, the Posh Sale offers fabulous new and "gently used" designer clothes—Donna Karan, Gucci, Calvin Klein, and Nicole Miller, among others. Lauren Bacall has donated some Armani suits and separates, originally $500–$1,200, here $40–$475, and Henry Kissinger has given a number of his swank Hermès ties, originally $180, here $25. There is a $10 entrance donation or $75 for a benefit ticket for the preview night. *The Lighthouse, 110 E. 60th St. (821-9300); A.E., M.C., V., checks; Fri. 6–9, Sat. 10–7, Sun. 11–7; 11/14–11/16.*

Pillow Talk

LA TIENDA, A STORE THAT JUST OPENED IN July, is filled with all things Mexican—new and vintage clothing, hand-painted rugs, and handcrafted fare from the owner's village. It's hosting a sample sale of Janet Bowblis's accessories, which are perfect Christmas presents: for example, silk and silk-and-velvet lavender sachets with intricate detailing, retail $25–$60, here $15–$30; silk and velvet pillows, retail $80–$120, here $45–$60. *La Tienda, 50 Spring St. (481-4404); checks accepted; Fri. 6–9, Sat.–Sun. noon–7; 11/14–11/16.*

Cache Savings

THE BACK OFFICES OF THRIFT STORES BECOME a trove of special items during a typical year, and the annual sale is when they're all brought out. At the Arthritis Foundation Thrift Shop's fiftieth-anniversary Christmas sale: Hermès Kelly bags, here $500 and $600; thirties Chanel silk-chiffon dress, here $1,000; Spanish woven-

DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Ondine Cohane, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, six weeks before the sale. Only sales exclusive to "Sales & Bargains" and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be considered.

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

sterling-silver mirror, here $35; Dunhill pipe, here $100; Versace full-length men's coat, here $1,200. *The Arthritis Foundation Thrift Shop, 121 E. 77th St. (772-8816); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Sat. 10–6; 11/12–11/15.*

Half Off

WITH THE DECISION TO CONCENTRATE ON one store instead of two, reGeneration's owners are closing up their East 10th Street location and having a moving sale. The mid-century inventory includes: George Nelson desk, was $1,500, now $1,050; Herman Miller storage cube, was $500, now $250; leather-and-rosewood chairs (set of six), were $850 each, now $600. *reGeneration, 223 E. 10th St. (614-9577); A.E., M.C., V.; Tues.–Sat. 1–7; 11/11–11/30.*

Learning to Speak Up

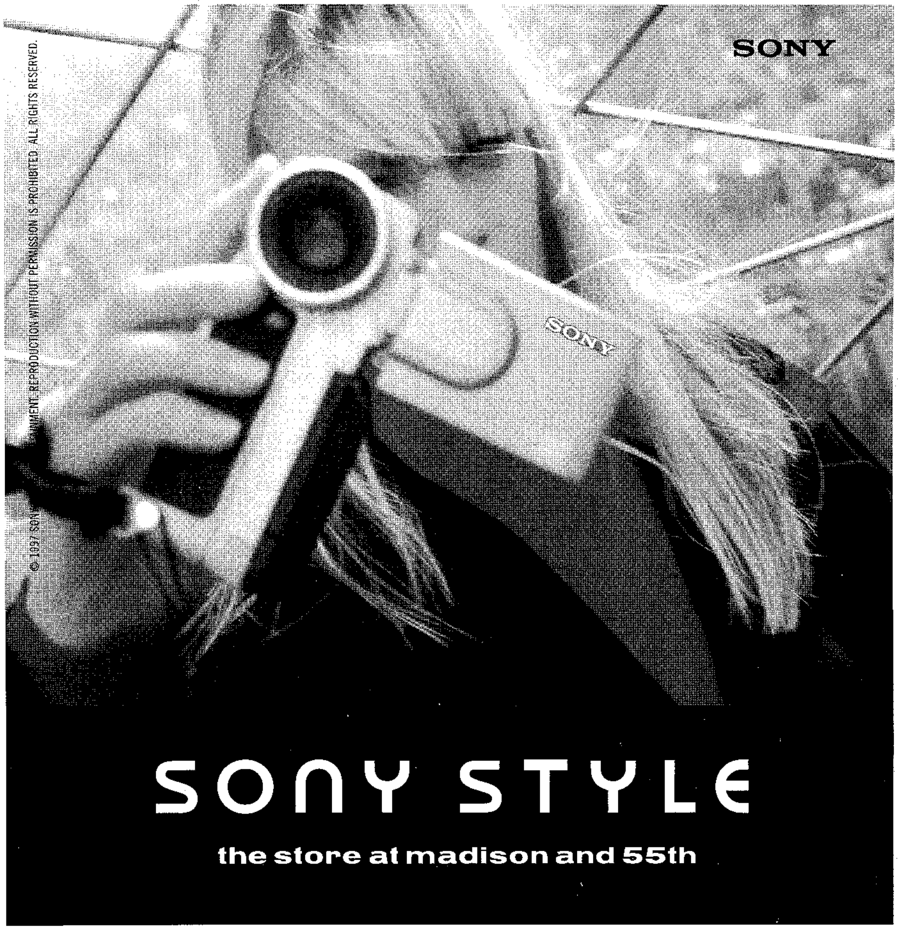
THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION, AN ORGANIZATION that provides many educational programs throughout the greater New York area, is having its nineteenth annual Holiday Bazaar and Raffle. The raffle has prizes like a trip to London for two; the bazaar includes jewelry, toys, and English china at bargain prices. Gala reception and preview sale, $25 per ticket; next-day admission is $2. *The English-Speaking Union, 16 E. 69th St. (879-6800, ext. 36); checks accepted; Fri. 6–9, Sat. 11–6; 11/14–11/15.*

Designer Yard Sale

ALESSI'S YARD SALE FEATURES SECONDS, overstocks, and discontinued products by designers like Michael Graves, Philippe Starck, Aldo Rossi, and Achille Castiglioni. For example, bowls, retail $25–$110, here $11–$55; watches, retail $225–$1,500, here $125–$600; pasta sets, retail $495, here $275. *Alessi Yard Sale, Loews New York Hotel, 569 Lexington Ave., at 51st St., suites C and D (752-7000); checks accepted; Thurs. 9–5; 11/13.*

One Plus One

DESPITE THE NEW-WORLD CONNOTATIONS of the name, Ameri deals strictly in Italian-made men's wear. Buy any of these and receive the same item or one of lesser value for free: Italian dress shirt, $175; Principe suit, $1,025; pants, $295. And recognizing that people may not want two overcoats, Ameri has simply put its cashmere ones on sale: were $895, now $395. *Ameri, 243 E. 60th St. (838-1300); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Sat. 10:30–7:30, Sun. noon–6; 11/15–12/31.* ■



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the store at madison and 55th
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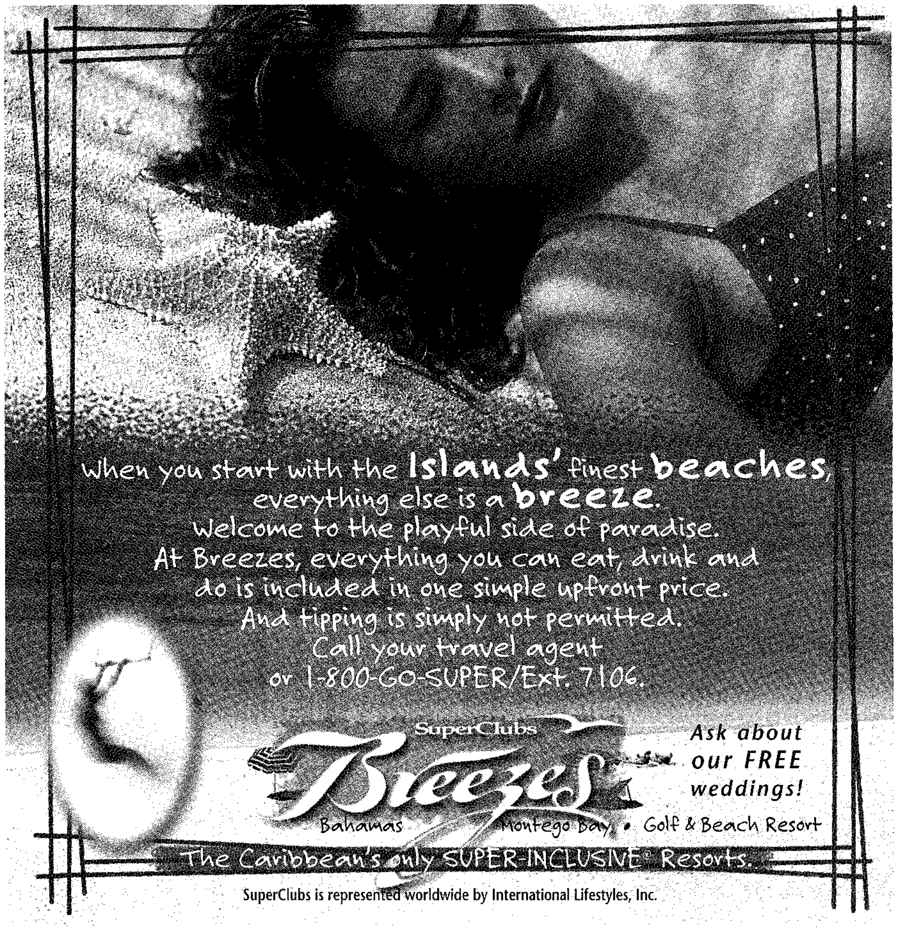

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'Starship Troopers' is brainlessness reaching for irony; Dustin Hoffman's TV newsman redeems 'Mad City' from predictability.

Web site: Fending off killer spiders in Verhoeven's *Starship Troopers.*

AT THE REPULSIVE CLIMAX OF **Starship Troopers,** which is about endless war between earthlings and giant outerplanetary spiders, a human captive is dragged forward and made to face an enormous "brain bug." At last! We're about to get an answer to the question tormenting us. Throughout the war, it's been understood that the bugs have been too stupid to win. But recently, arachnid intelligence has been improving. After all, they have managed to wipe out Buenos Aires (or is it all of South America? Anyway, they kill a lot of people). Where does the new intellectual prowess come from? Finally, we find out: The brain bug plunges a tubelike tentacle into the captive's head and sucks out his gray matter. So that's how they do it. But we wonder: Is there also a hidden metaphor here? Director Paul Verhoeven, who began his career back in the Netherlands with such elegant entertainments as *Soldier of Orange* and *The Fourth Man,* seems to have undergone, in Hollywood, a draining operation of his own. Since arriving here, Verhoeven has made not elegant entertainment but such violent near-trash as *RoboCop, Basic Instinct, Total Recall,* and *Showgirls.* Of course, Verhoeven is not likely to see the matter as I do. He's made *Starship Troopers* in the "ironic" style of current pop movies: The picture seems to be making fun of the very idiocy that it's so desperately packaging and selling to us. A director may relinquish his intelligence, but he still tries to save his self-respect. Pulling the rug out from under his own work, he may even convince himself that he's doing something witty.

In form, this depressing super-production is less science fiction than World War II platoon movie. Just as in a picture like *Sands of Iwo Jima,* a group of guys gather together in basic training, go to war, and suffer triumph or death according to a strict plan of virtue rewarded and weakness punished. Verhoeven and screenwriter Ed Neumeier, adapting a Robert Heinlein novel, have moved the old generic war plot into the future, but with a feminist slant. The boys and girls now train together, stripping off their uniforms for communal showers, fighting and dying side by side. Physically, the men and women are just bodies—the men with square jaws, the women with full figures and tawny hair. The actors, obviously chosen for their muscular anonymity (Casper Van Dien? Dina Meyer?), deliver such lines as "A citizen has the courage to make the safety of the human race a personal responsibility" with the dim enthusiasm of teens in a beach-blanket movie. The simplicity, the gung ho, let's-kill-bugs spirit is no doubt meant satirically, but it will also function well in the international market. No one in Bangkok is likely to have the slightest trouble understanding *Starship Troopers.* Well-built, naked Americans and dead bugs are popular everywhere.

Verhoeven throws in a variety of government recruiting videos in which the bug-fighters are made to look like uniformed Fascist hordes. The videos are meant as satire, too. But of course it's these very Fascist hordes that the rest of the movie is celebrating—indeed, we are told that the world will be annihilated without them. So what's the point of the joke? Verhoeven may be cheering himself up with these sportive flourishes, but he's not doing a thing for the rest of us. The spirit of *Starship Troopers* is grim and sanguinary. We spend most of our time watching men and women pump bullets into disgusting creatures that seem to be all sexual organs—waving green tentacles and devouring vulvas. Even though the special effects are spectacular (the creatures fly in, hop over rocks by the hundreds, erupt from underground), *Starship Troopers* is fatally

Photograph by Stephen Vaughan.

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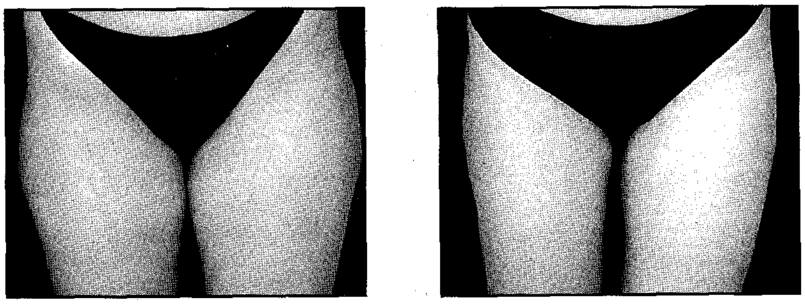

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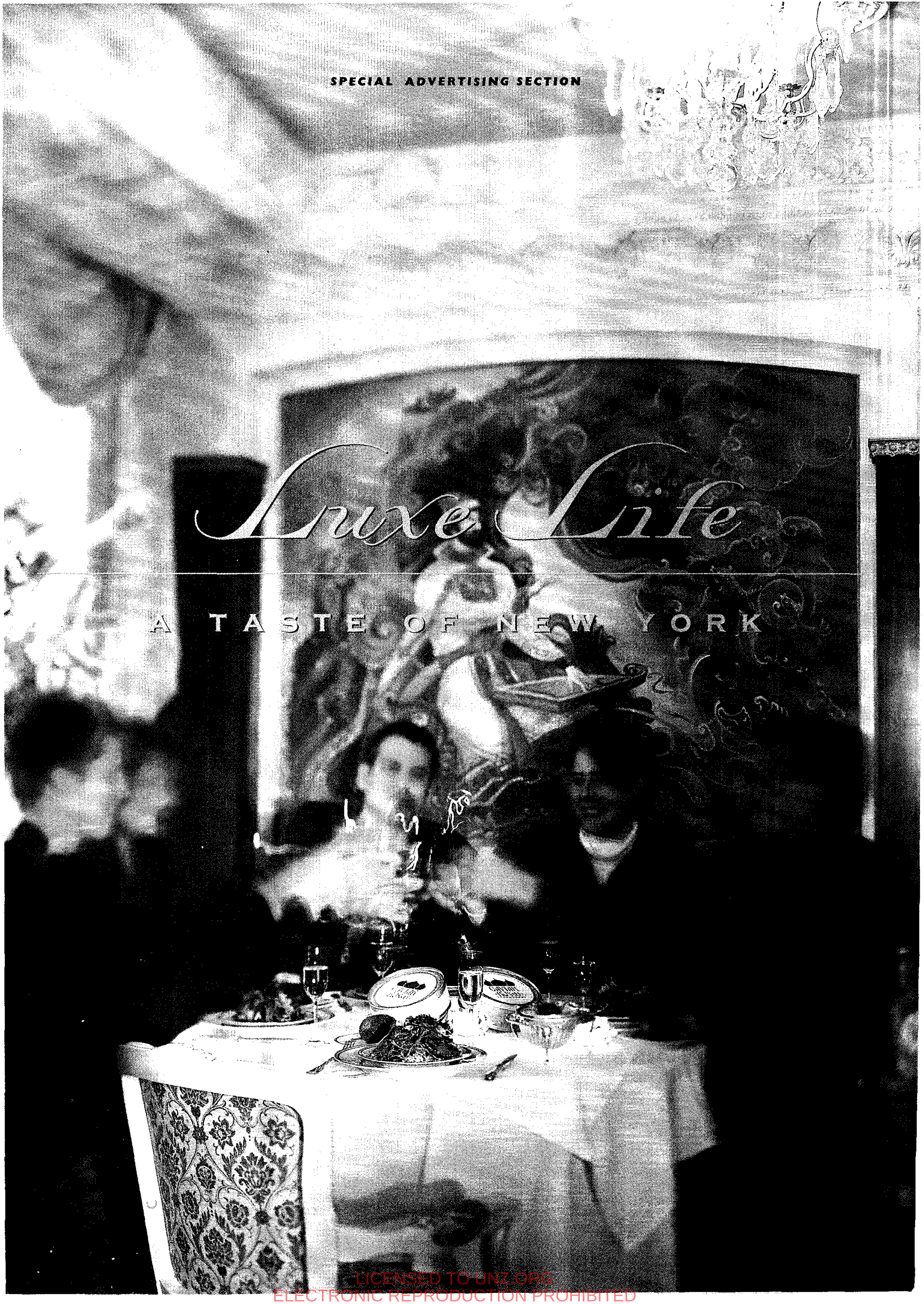
lacking in lightness, play, invention. Human bodies are gutted and eviscerated, the limbs pulled off, the heads drilled. Are children supposed to enjoy this literal-minded, grisly bloodbath? As you watch the endless carnage, you become sure that Hollywood has gone completely, utterly mad. But how can you fight the success of "ironic" stupidity? Verhoeven may have had his brains removed, but it's the audience that winds up with a hole in the head.

DUSTIN HOFFMAN IS AT THE TOP OF HIS GAME in **Mad City,** Costa Gavras's glum morality tale about the depredations of the media. Hoffman plays Max Brackett, a former big-time TV reporter who has been busted down to a local California station after running afoul of the network's star anchor (Alan Alda). Max is doing a nothing story at a local natural-history museum when a fired employee—Sam Baily (John Travolta), a guard—barges back into the museum to plead for his job with his ex-boss (Blythe Danner). Hoping to be taken seriously, Sam, who isn't too bright, carries a gun, and when the gun goes off by accident, wounding another guard, and Sam locks the door, shutting in some schoolchildren, Max knows that he's right in the middle of a media gold mine—a hostage situation. Grabbing the spotlight, he works the moment for all it's worth.

Hoffman plays Max the relentless opportunist very quietly, as a man who knows how to charm, a man who even knows how to listen. Some of Hoffman's best moments come when he's just watching John Travolta, who gives a big, sweaty performance as the unhappy guard. Travolta tries very hard, but he's been caught, I think, in a trap not of his own making. Both Costa Gavras and the screenwriter, Tom Matthews (working from a story he created with Eric Williams), are so determined to make Sam a bumbling innocent—a pure American sap, a victim—that they rob him of will and finally of interest. Our curiosity leaves Sam and shifts back to Max, who makes the bitter discovery that television, which he thinks he's master of, has a demonic energy that he can't possibly control. Hoffman, keeping the performance quiet right to the end, very subtly runs through shades of regret, pity, disgust, and self-disgust.

Mad City is an intelligent and heartfelt attempt to shake us up, but we've been over this ground before—in better movies like *Dog Day Afternoon,* in the many media mea culpas following the death of Princess Diana. What we feel when watching *Mad City* is not so much shock or rage as sorrow. The movie says that television appropriates human tragedy for its own benefit. True enough, though the real problem is that few of us have the strength to turn off the set. ■



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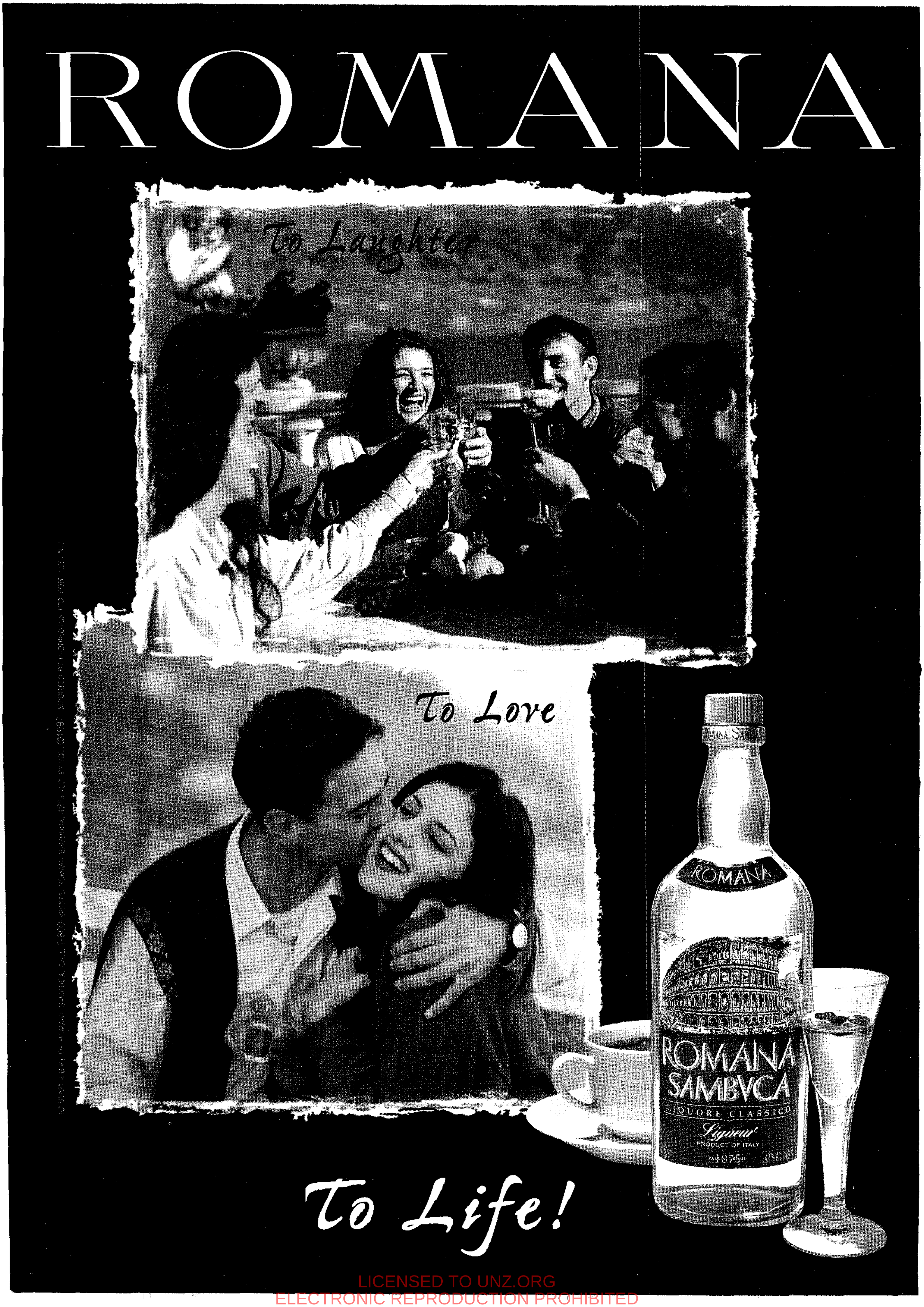
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BY ELIZABETH FAIRCHILD

The good life, the luxe life...New Yorkers have never had it so good. A potent mix of glamour and elegance abounds in the city. We've had a chance to sniff out just what makes life in New York a pleasure. Can't decide between Beluga or Sevruga? Wondering where to savor the season's first truffles? Want the real thing? Whether it's platinum, the perfect shave, mink, Tahitian pearls, antique cufflinks, or sirloin sizzled to perfection, we'll show you the way.

But let's get one thing straight. Luxe life is about living. Not about longing. Keep in mind that the finer things in life come in all sizes, shapes and, believe it or not, prices. Luxe has more to do with a state-of-mind than the state of your bank account. So, whether or not you need a reason to indulge, we'll give you plenty within these pages. Just remember: Luxe Living is probably not for every day. But it certainly can make every day special.

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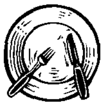

No matter what the zeitgeist, a taste for the good life never really shifts with the times. Luckily, there's never been a better time to indulge in a passion for fine wining and dining in Manhattan. Gone are the days when a glass of house red or white were your only wine options; when white with fish, red with meat were holy writs. Nowadays, restaurants have latched on to the luxe list. Winning wine lists that reflect civilized, savvy diners who not only know Latour from Lascombes, but demand it. Don't worry about food getting short shrift. *Au contraire*. Top chefs are orchestrating menus that give wine and food equal billing. And let's not forget the flowers, the linen, the crystal, and the silver. After all, the good life is a mix of luxury and elegance, with a pinch of restraint thrown in for good measure.

When your gilded palate is in need of a soul-satisfying experience, head to **Caviar Russe** for the ultimate reward. Especially when it's served in a fairy-tale townhouse setting. Hand-sculpted moldings and elegant banquettes serve as a backdrop for the real reason you're here—imported caviar. Order Russia's finest by the spoon, by the gram, with chilled oysters, in puff pastry, or with lobster, sirloin tartare, or black truffles. Naturally, a flute of bubbly doesn't hurt either. If you're feeling in the gift-giving mood or want to indulge at home, stop by the on-site retail store.

Luxury abounds in Manhattan and **Les Célébrités** is every bit as elegant and sophisticated as the city itself. Original art works by Gene Hackman, Elke Sommer, and Billy Dee Williams hang on the mahogany walls. And the dazzling decor is the perfect backdrop for truffles, spit-roasted Scottish pheasant, and black currant and vodka cake. The stellar wine list is as lavish as the food, particularly the 1989 and 1990 Burgundies.

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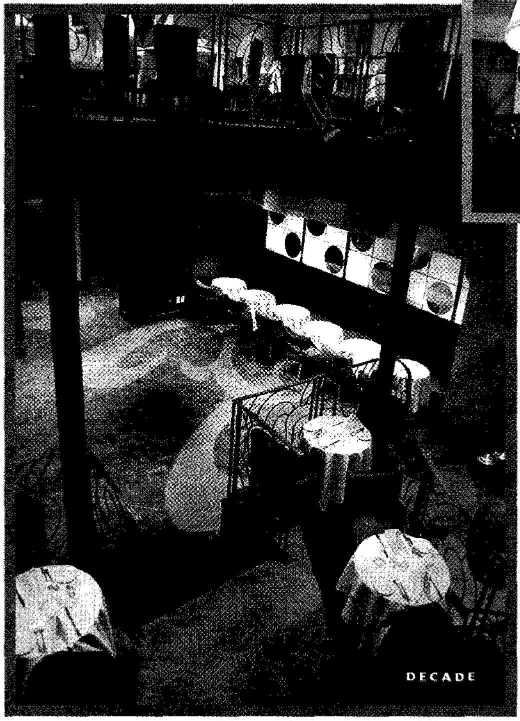
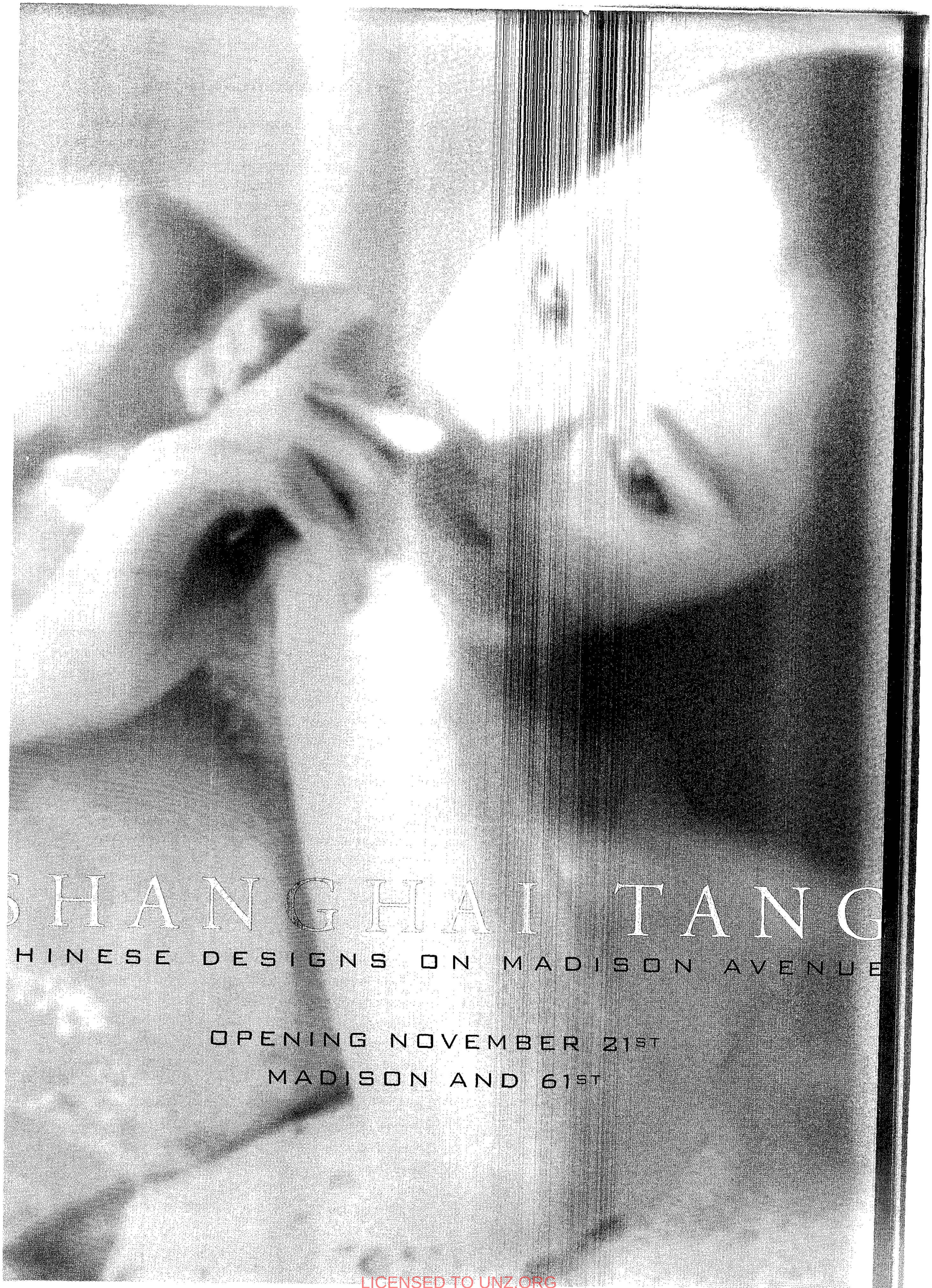
Like the Italian bicycle it's named after, **Campagnola** is top-of-the-line Italian. The rustic room is comfortable yet feels like a retreat. You might just want to make a meal of a gorgeous antipasto that beckons from the center of the room. Or hold out for one of the savory pasta dishes, like the delectible ravioli with porcini mushrooms, an indulgence that doesn't weigh you down.

If you've ever wanted to make a grand entrance, **Ciao Europa** is the place to do it. Floor-to-ceiling murals of reigning royalty and a double-level dining room make it possible. Once the imaginary applause has died down, revive yourself with sublime homemade mozzarella cheese, earthy Osso Buco, any number of European-influenced dishes, and a selection or two from the wonderful wine-by-the-glass menu.

Step in to **Ecco** and step back to a time when women were women and men wore hats. This Wall Street Northern Italian restaurant is a haven for pasta lovers who want to be pampered. Carved mahogany, high tin ceilings, turn-of-the-century bar and live piano music on Fridays and Saturdays make you wonder why you don't get out more often.



Get ready to catch your breath when you enter **Hudson River Club** because the views are truly breathtaking. Nothing like dining with Lady Liberty in full view. Especially when you can choose from Hudson River Valley regional specialties like fois gras, apple-butternut squash soup, or anything chocolate. The well-chosen, extensive wine list also gives a rightful nod to New York State wines. Gives you lots of good reasons to remember why you love New York.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Even though it has been around for 27 years, there's nothing dated about the romantic atmosphere (real working fireplaces) or classic French fare at **René Pujol**. Start off with, say, pristine lump crabmeat salad, move on to pan-seared beef mignonettes, and finish off with that bottle of Bordeaux ordered from one of the finest wine selections in New York. Who said anything about going to the theater?

While the dining room at the **Bull & Bear** may feel like an English Club, you won't find a slab of cheddar and pickled onions on the menu. Top-notch steaks, chops, and seafood and their carefully chosen, extensive wine list are just a few reasons it's been a hangout for regulars for over 35 years. After a tough day battling Wall Street bulls and bears, head to the bar for a selection of premium cigars, single malts, and single-batch bourbons. Its Midtown location (at the Waldorf=Astoria) make this a must for your luxe black book.

Don't let the name fool you. **The Cigar Bar at Trumpets** is a lot more than a Havana-inspired cigar haven. For starters the seasonal menu may include smoked salmon with black truffle oil, a 24 oz. Angus rib chop, or grilled shrimp in lemongrass. An impressive wine list includes gems from California and France, including Sequoia Grove, Carneros, Chardonnay, Louis Jadot, Vosne Romanee. Naturally there's an up-to-snuff cigar menu and top-shelf cognacs, scotches, and you name it when it comes to after-dinner drinks.

Salam Cafe and Restaurant defies the stereotype of a Middle Eastern restaurant. From the affordable, international wine list, to the cloth-covered tables, to the top-quality and satisfying menu of vegetables, curries, lamb and chicken specialties ladled over couscous, to the desserts (warm baklava topped with home made cinnamon ice cream), low-key international luxe never tasted so good.

When you want to retreat from Midtown madness, step into **Tea at the Park Restaurant**, an annex to **The Park Restaurant**. This conversation-conducive spot is home to the Ladies Who Lunch and businessmen who want to avoid the power-lunch scene. Once you've sunken into one of the overstuffed easy chairs, transport yourself to more civilized times with a pot of tea—Egyptian Chamomile, Lover's Leap Garden, or Jasmine with Flowers are favorites. Nourish your soul with a dainty tea sandwich, oven-fresh scone or pastry, and the escape will be complete. As the afternoon sun sinks into the sky, think about settling into The Park Restaurant for a completely different type of respite. There, amidst Baccarat chandeliers and velvet banquettes, you can sup on bourbon crabmeat salad, steak frites, and rosemary créme brulée. And just think, you don't even have to cross the street.

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- Caviar should be judged by its quality and taste, not by its price. The most expensive is not necessarily the best.
- Buy only from a trusted source.
- Caviar should have a healthy, glossy appearance. The eggs should be separate and firm, but not hard.
- Fresh caviar should be consumed within one week of purchase (two at most).
- Caviar's enemies are air and heat. Once opened, eat as soon as possible.
- In the unlikely event of leftovers, cover tightly with plastic, refrigerate and use within 2-3 days.
- If you buy caviar packed in glass, turn it around slowly; the eggs should follow the jar around.
- The best way to eat good caviar is by itself. Or maybe with white toast, blinis, or new potatoes. Hard boiled eggs and chopped onions mask the delicate flavor of "Aphrodite's eggs."
- Don't use stainless steel or silver or your caviar will quickly change flavor, and your silver will tarnish. If you can get your hands on bone, mother-of-pearl or gold plated spoons, more power to you. If not, plastic will do.
- Count on 1-2 ounces per person.
- Did you know...Caviar is light, full of vitamins, high in protein, and low in calories...it's good for hangovers...and, for the ultimate in a luxury skin-nourishing treatment, you can even bathe in it!

—Several tips from David Magnotta, Caviar Russe.

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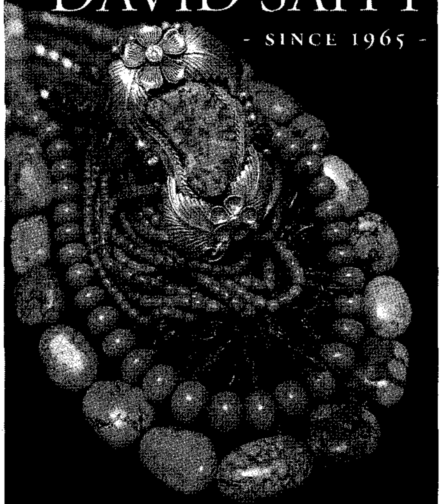

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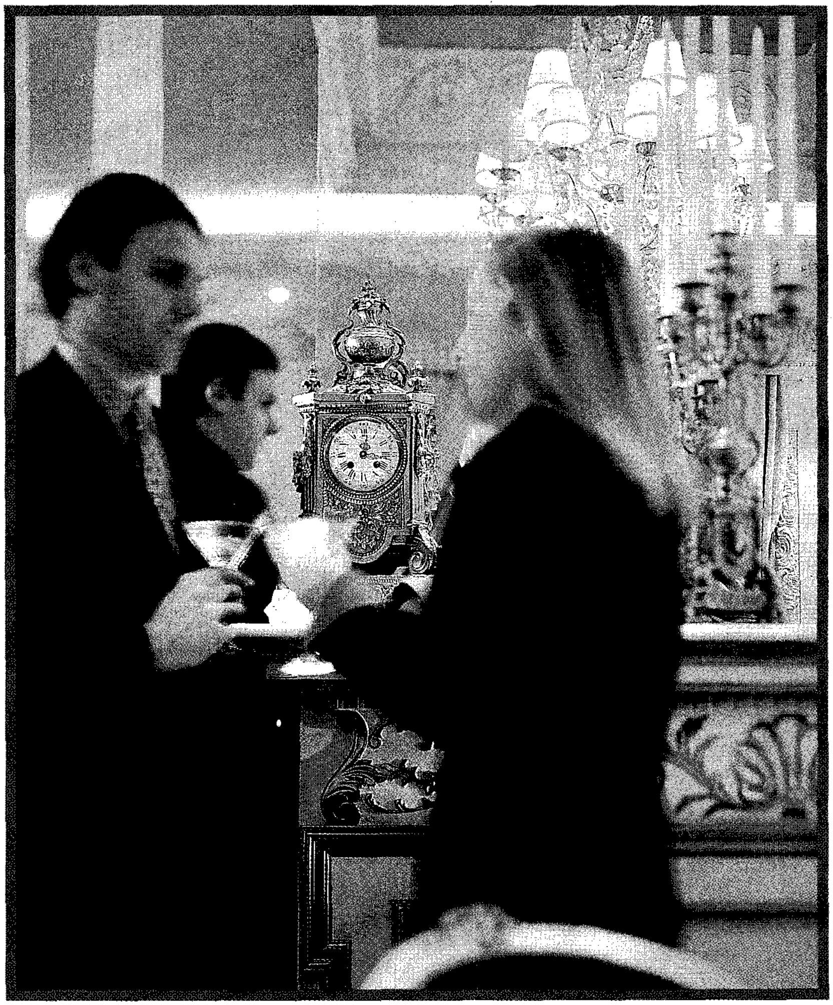

Luxe Night Out. Bar None.

It's no news that the martini, (shaken not stirred, civilization in a glass, the passport to a longed-for era), has fueled a cocktail revival in Manhattan. What is noteworthy is that now you have more ways to celebrate the good life. More options for luxe libations—single barrel bourbons, rich Sauternes, and top-of-the-line after-dinner digestifs, like **Romana Sambuca**. More cigar sanctuaries. But no matter what your pleasure, don't rush. This kind of luxury is meant to be savored.

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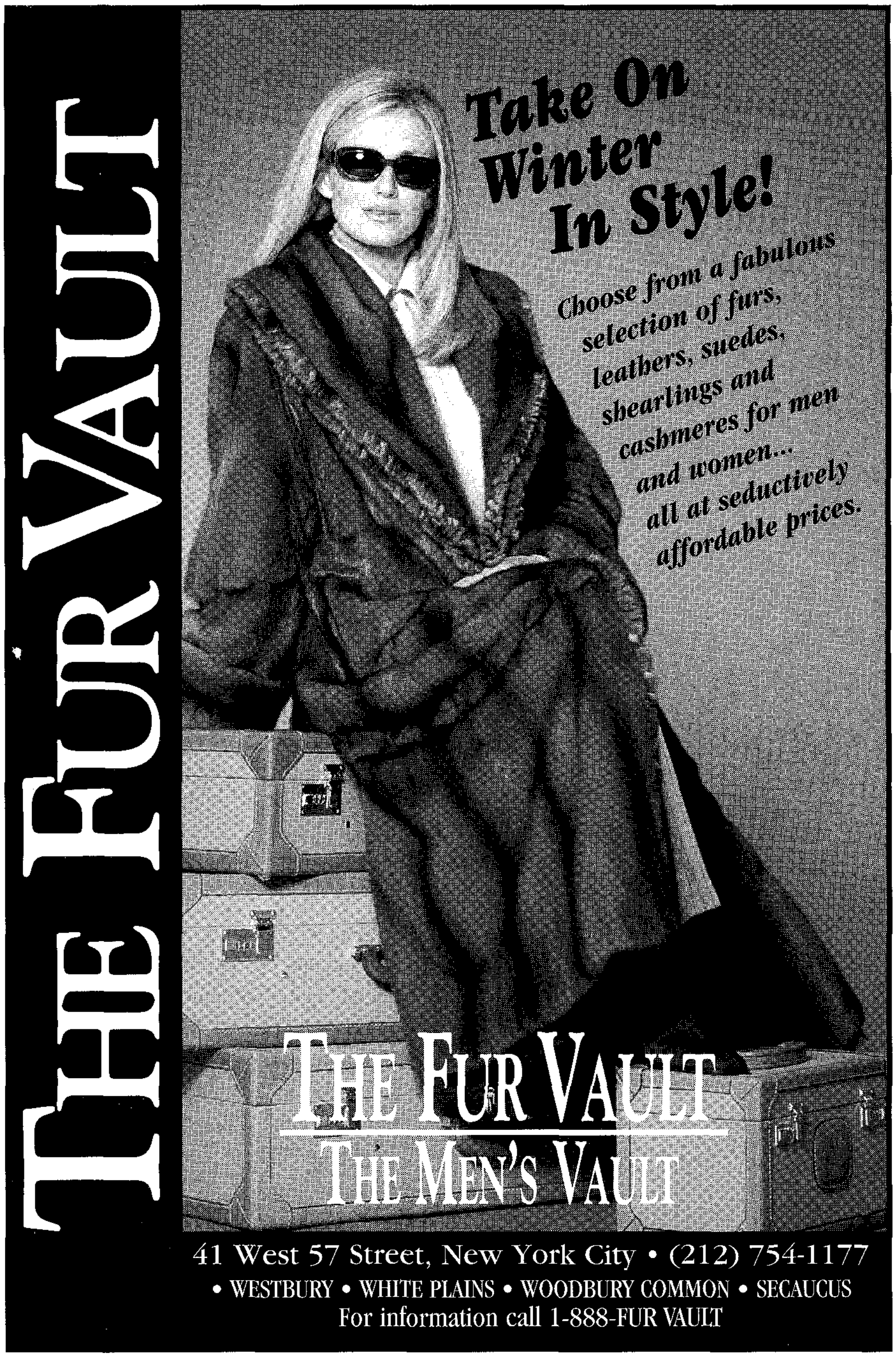
East not only meets West at the new hotspot **Mica Bar**, it absolutely fuses in the form of vodka and sake cocktails, martinis, and shots. But this is not a typical bar scene. It's



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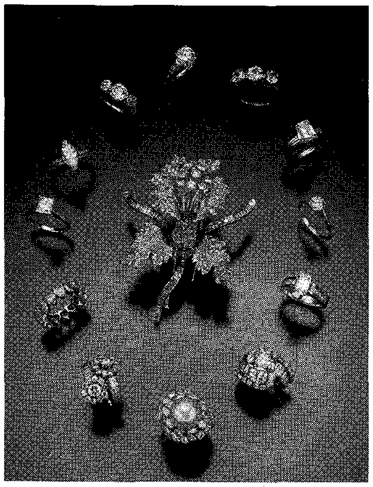

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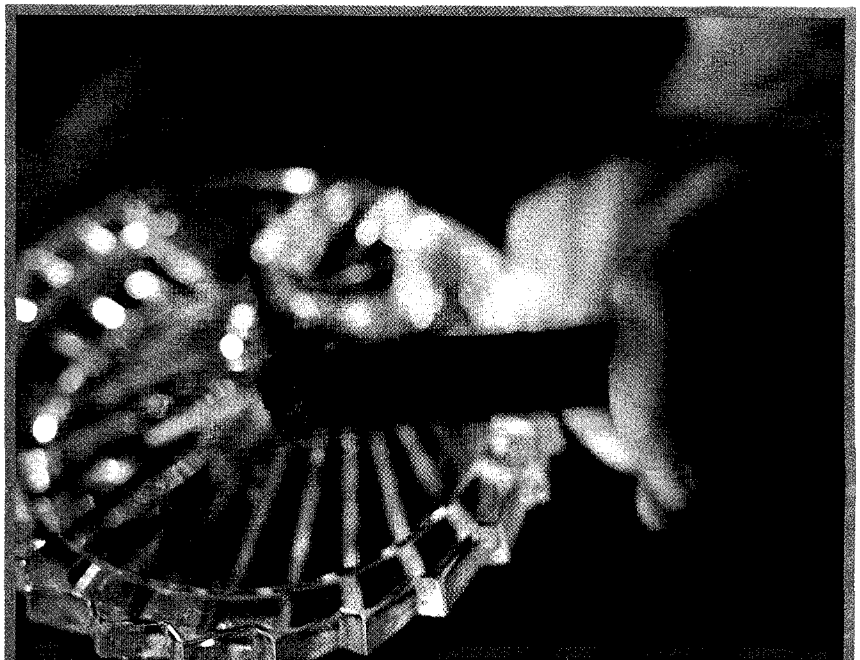

ROSSINI'S

a civilized lounge where you can actually hear what you're saying. You can even discuss the meaning of life on the outdoor roof deck (yes, it's heated) while sipping on a Sakatini or Mica's Own Chocolate Martini and supping on spicy almond fried chicken with honey lime or sliced duck breast wrapped in a soft tortilla.

It's Wednesday. It feels like a bustling Thursday night on the town. Head to **Rossini's** where it's Cigar Night, featuring a special cigar, appetizer, and drink menu every Wednesday from 6-8 p.m. Puff on a premium cigar, pick your poison, and nibble on an appetizer from the special weekly menu. Bonuses: Manny, the bartender, live music, and great antipasto. So go ahead relax in that swivel chair. Friday is only two days away.

A neighborhood haunt, **S&T 587 Bar** (Stock & Tankard) welcomes anyone interested in settling in for a fine stogie, a mean martini, a glass of great wine, a single malt scotch, and a good time. A solid menu features steaks, grilled chicken, and pizza, and sometimes veers off in unusual, but delicious, directions with alligator cakes and Vietnamese-style squid. Depending on your mood—and the weather—sit in the cozy indoor lounge or enclosed garden deck outside.

S&T 587 BAR

More Luxe Libations

Whether or not you need a digestif after your sirloin feast, anise-flavored sambuca is the perfect way to end a meal. Order straight up or any which way with coffee. Start with the top-of-the-shelf brand, **Romana Sambuca**, then raise a toast to laughter, love, and life.

Romana con Mosca
Serve 2 oz. Roman Sambuca straight up in a cordial or snifter glass. Float 3 roasted coffee beans on top. One for health. One for wealth. One for happiness.

Romana Latte
Add 1 oz. Romana Sambuca and 1 oz. cream or milk to coffee.

Romana Creme Cafe
Combine 3/4 oz. Romana Sambuca, 3/4 oz. coffee liqueur, and 3/4 oz. cream or milk. Shake with ice and strain into a cocktail glass.

Mica Bar Sakatini
This is heady stuff!
ice cubes
1 oz. premium vodka
1/2 oz. premium sake
splash dry vermouth
1/2 tsp. wasabi
Fill martini pitcher with ice. Pour in vodka and sake and shake. Strain into chilled martini glass. Add vermouth and wasabi and stir.
(Recipe from Mica Bar)

ROMANA
ROMANA SAMBVCA
Liquore Classico
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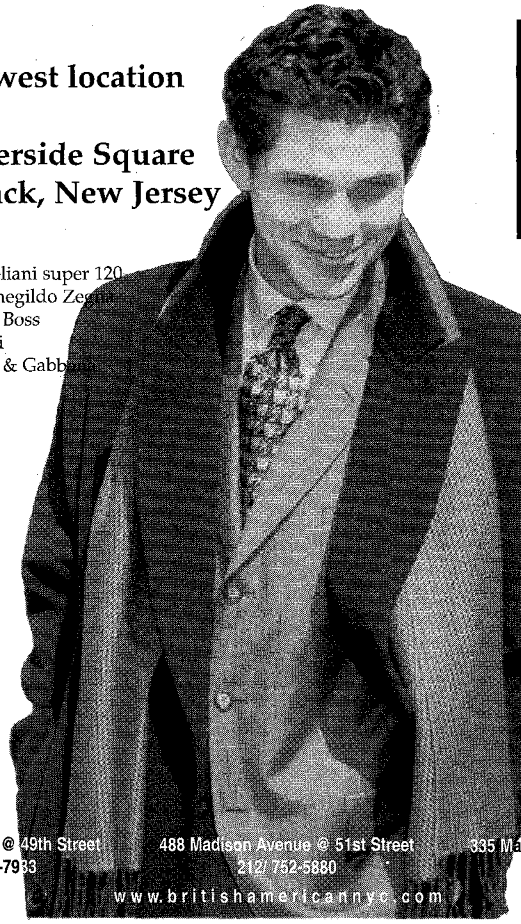
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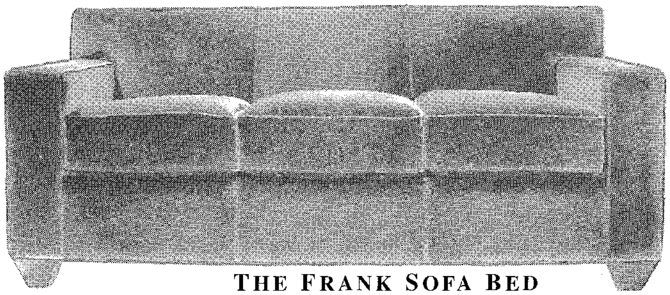

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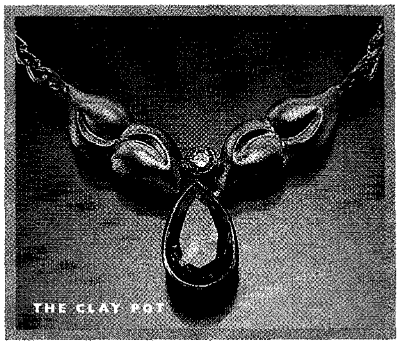
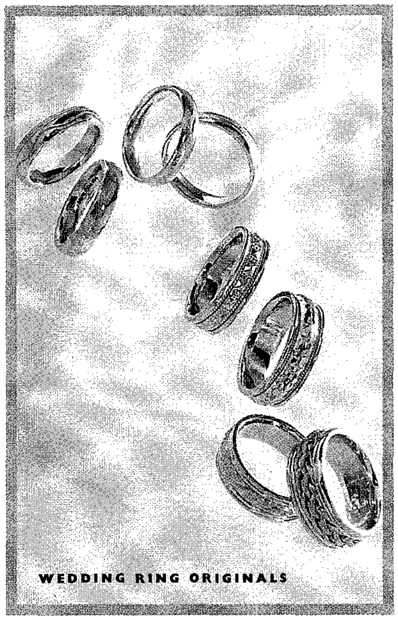
La Creme De La Gems

Whether platinum is your preference or pearls your passion, jewelry is back in a big way. But that doesn't mean high voltage baubles. Subdued sparklers are more like it. Pieces that balance low-key glitz with the grit that goes into a well-made piece. So when you need the lift of luxe, here's what's hot. Handmade. Platinum. South Sea pearls (especially black). Wristwatches (something circa 1940 perhaps). White-hot metals (platinum, white gold). Native American Indian. Cufflinks (French cuffs are au courant). Diamonds (of course). Anything that's the real thing.

Let's not forget personal expression. After all, you want to reveal without offering revelations. Whether you want to give off the scent of luxury, innocence, glamour, or elegance or any combination, only in New York will you find so many choices, so many facets of jewelry design that are distinguished by style. Not by fashion.

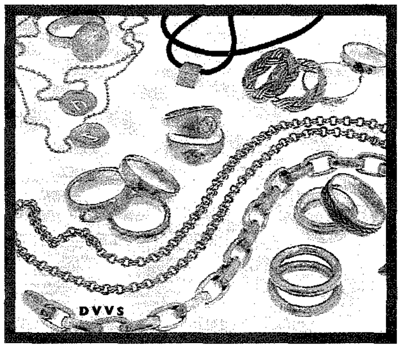


Yes, **The Clay Pot** has clay pots, very nice ones at that. But it also offers an incredible selection of gold, platinum, and diamond engagement bands, many in the $500 range. Plus casual, unusual jewelry in silver (engraved alphabet rings, the jewelry of Lisa Jenks). All creations are handmade by American artisans.



Every jeweler deals with wedding rings, but **Wedding Ring Originals** is truly a specialist. They offer a number of designer lines, including the notable Judith Evans Platinum engament rings. They also carry rings that marry the romance of sapphires, diamonds and platinum, as well as jewelry that has nothing to do with The Big Day. Delicate, gorgeous thin chains woven in light platinum wire; small, whimsical earrings in the French wire style. Their website: wwwweddingrings.com.

Handmade. There's that word again. But at **DVVS** it really is their M.O. From 24K gold, one-of-a-kind pieces to chains and colored pearls, DVVS co-owners James Corry and Evans Siskel feature their own designs plus those of other inspired craftsmen. They also will really work with you to design whatever you have in mind. At a price that you won't mind.



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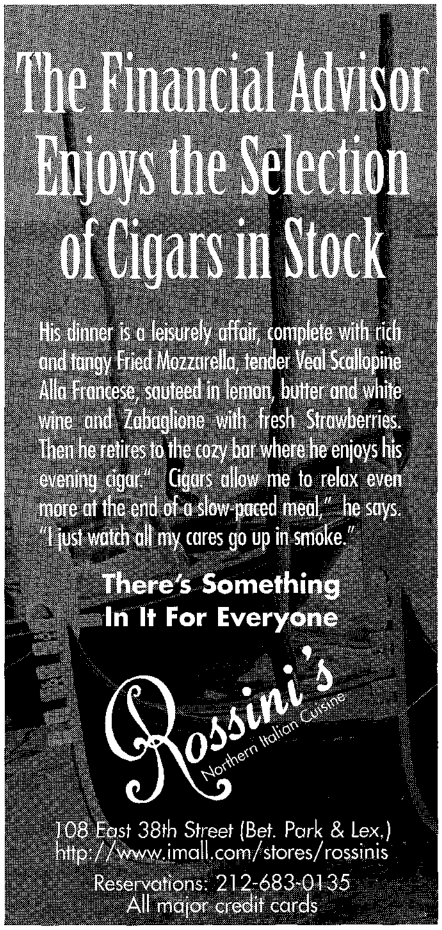
The Financial Advisor Enjoys the Selection of Cigars in Stock

His dinner is a leisurely affair, complete with rich and tangy Fried Mozzarella, tender Veal Scallopine Alla Francese, sauteed in lemon, butter and white wine and Zabaglione with fresh Strawberries. Then he retires to the cozy bar where he enjoys his evening cigar." Cigars allow me to relax even more at the end of a slow-paced meal," he says. "I just watch all my cares go up in smoke."

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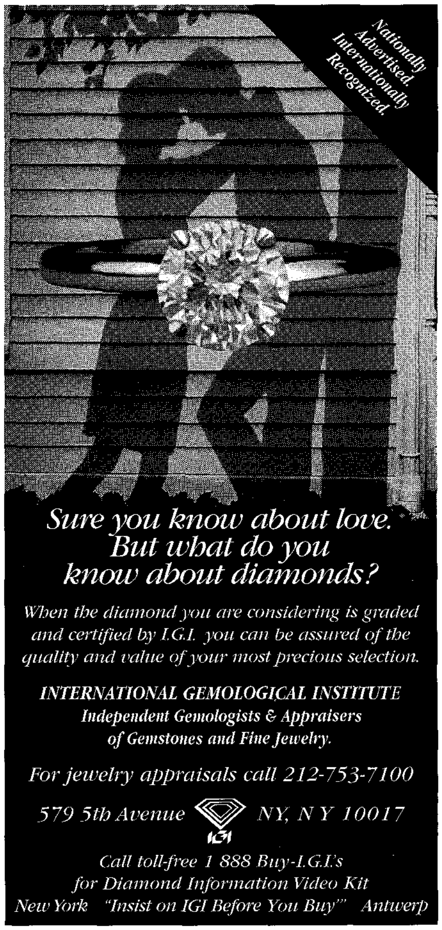
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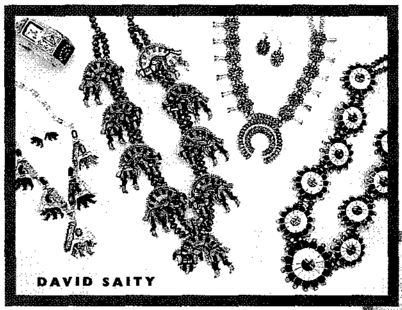
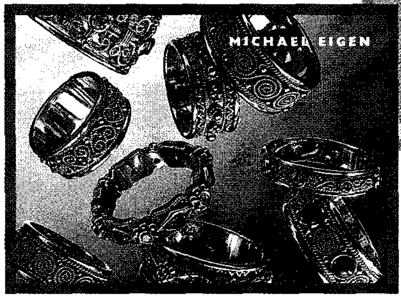
Major fashion magazines and *The New York Times* all recommend **David Saity**, a collector and curator par excellence of spectacular Native American jewelry, as the best in the country. Designs include antique and contemporary silver-and-stone work (turquoise, coral, jet and mother-of-pearl) of the Navaho, Hopi and Zuni tribes.



Michael Eigen's passion is for the exceptional. Walk into Michael Eigen and you'll find designs by some of the finest contemporary American designers working today. Like Gabrielle Sanchez, Nathan Levy, and Barbara Bagner. You'll also find top-notch watches. An unbelievably knowledgeable staff, monthly openings, lectures, and demonstrations will make you feel passionate too.

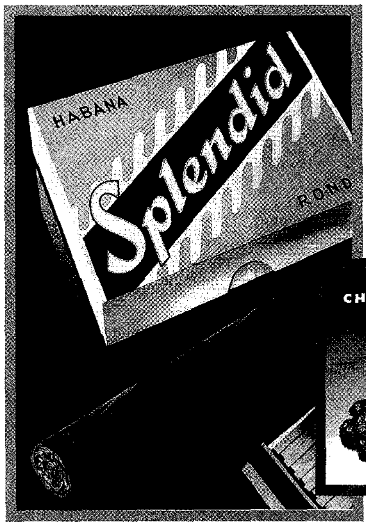
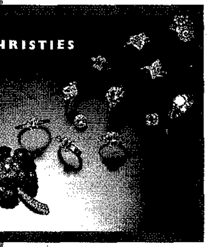
THE DIAMOND COMPANY



If you want to play it loose, head to **The Diamond Co.** Since they manufacture loose diamonds and diamond jewelry themselves, you can forget middlemen and their markups. You'll find a vast, and we mean vast, selection of diamonds and settings. They'll help you brush up on your 4 C's (color, cut, clarity and carat) before making a diamond buying decision. Walk in or check out their web site at www.thediamondco.com.

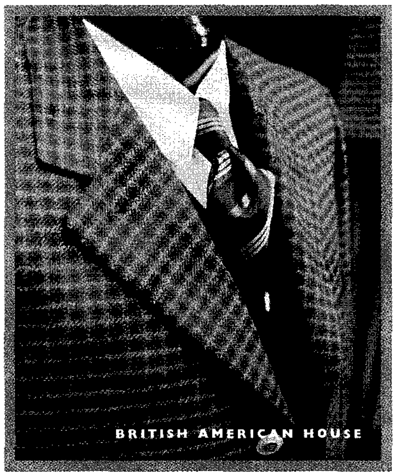
The International Gemmological Institute (IGI) is the largest independent gem certification and appraisal institute in the world. So before you set your sights on that "to-die-for" diamond, look before you leap and give IGI a call at 1-888-BUY-IGIS. Their information packet including "What You Should Know About Buying a Diamond" video and booklet will set you straight and give you the scoop on appraising appraisers.

Going once...
Going Twice...

Whether you're buying, selling, or just looking, there's nothing like the thrill of an auction. But auctions aren't just about headline-making paintings...with pricetags to match; there's something for everyone. **Phillips** is one of New York's best kept secrets for men's and women's jewelry and wristwatches.

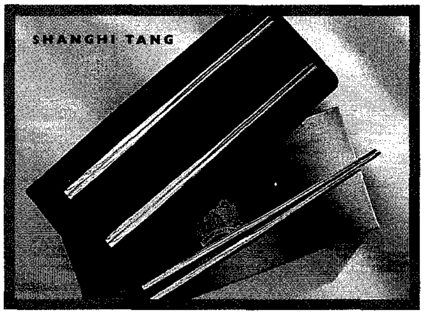
If you're on the lookout for *anything from a rare baseball card to a unique movie poster*, head to **Christie's East** newly renovated gallery. There, you'll find sports memorabilia, Hollywood posters, and animation art being auctioned off, as well as other moderately priced fare, including furniture, paintings, and jewelry. Keep an eye out for auction schedules and don't be surprised if you come away with a bargain. And a fever. Auction fever.

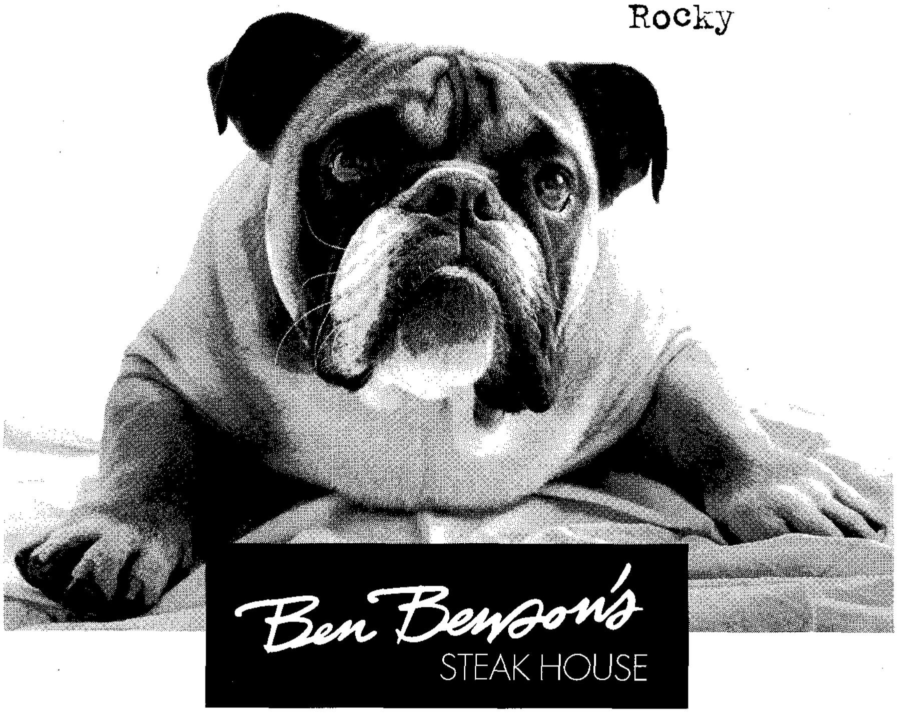


A Cut Above

At **British American House**, you'll find fine living clothing that disarms you without unmanning you. You can't go wrong with top designers like Hugo Boss, Valentino, Canali and Versace. And you can't argue with clothing and service that frees you to be your own luxe self.

Mark your calendars. November 21 is the day that **Shaghai Tang** opens its Madison Avenue doors, just in time for the holiday influx. In this private-label emporium, silk-damask pillows take their place beside vibrant silk dresses. Modern and classic Chinese fashion at its finest.





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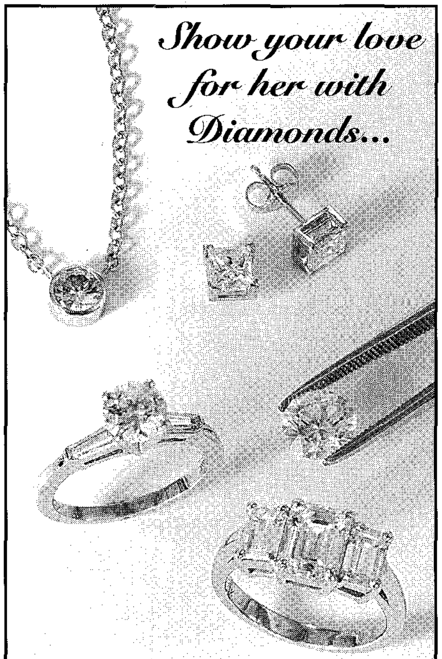

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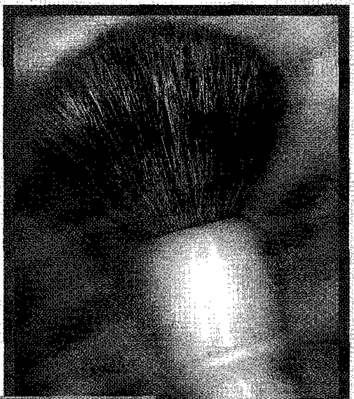
Saved by a Shave



The perfect shave, like many things luxe, can make you feel like a million bucks. Here is the perfect way to get a respite from the little outbreaks of madness around us.

- Settle down in your barber's comfortable chair and close your eyes.
- Relax while nourishing oils are massaged into your face.
- Next comes a steamy towel.
- Barber whips up your chosen shaving cream to a silken lather then applies with a cashmere-soft brush.
- Barber glides a straight razor across your beard like a knife across butter.
- For the finish, a bracing cold towel and your choice of after-shave milk or balm of flower essence.
- Optional splash of your favorite cologne follows.

The At-Home Shave

Always shave after a hot shower...not before.

Always use hot water while shaving, to soften the beard.

Use a good glycerin-based shaving cream or shaving soap. Steer clear of products that contain menthol because they'll close your pores and stiffen your beard.

Use a shaving brush made of badger hair. It will help you lift the beard from the face, and give you a good lather.

Always shave with the grain, i.e., in the direction the hair grows. Go against the grain and you could get ingrown hairs.

Use a good quality blade with a handle that gives you a good weight and balance for better control. Forget the cheap, lightweight drugstore type.

The Feel of Luxe

At the end of the day, the luxe life is all about knowing who you are, where you are and where you want to be. And being happy with it. And no matter what your choices tell you about yourself, the real things in life make the basics better. So whether its the wheels you drive, the fur you wrap yourself in, the sofa you sleep on, or the shave you slave over, the good things in life can make you ask how you got by this long without them.

Driving a **Jaguar** is about much more than the business of getting about. It's a transporting experience, one that's made even more sensuous in the latest XJ8 sedan. Powered by the same V8 engine found in the Jaguar XK8 sports car, the new sedan is defined by handling that's more responsive, by a ride that's more refined and by safety features that are more than responsible. It's a car with impeccable manners.

THE FUR VAULT

Fur is back. There's no doubt about it. And at **The Fur Vault**, you'll find luxurious creations (try cashmere, suede and leather on for size). Luscious colors. And a selection that will suit every suit, men's or women's. So if you're looking for a style that stays up late. Or calls it a day at 5 p.m., check out one of their 5 locations.

Fur has been in fashion at **Ritz Furs** for over 50 years. Choose from new and gently worn furs and shearlings, many by top designers, all at a fraction of their original prices. Classic and contemporary mink, sable, lynx and more. Putting on the Ritz and experiencing the thrill and seduction of old-fashioned luxury never felt so good.

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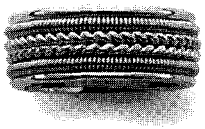

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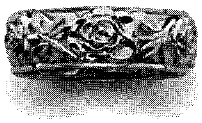

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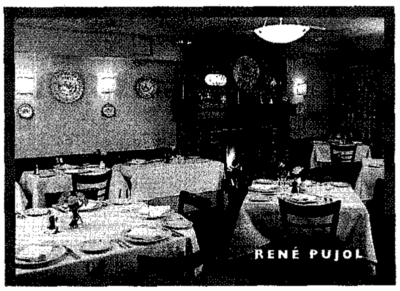

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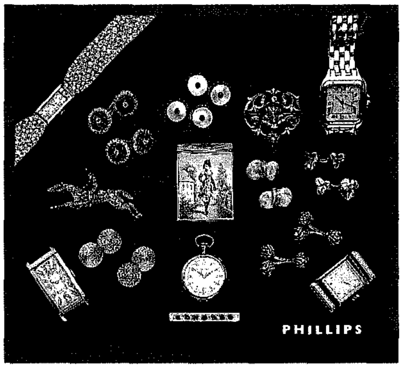

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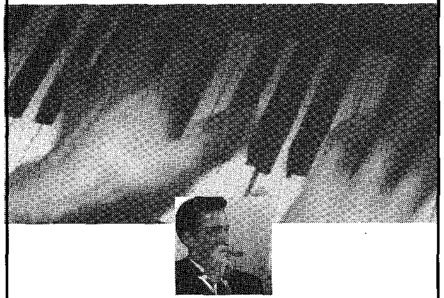

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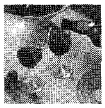

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THEATER JOHN SIMON

A Modest *Proposals*

Neil Simon's latest merges race and repartee, metaphysics and mafiosi, sex and sentiment, in an ultimately underseasoned stew.

IN **Proposals,** NEIL SIMON, THE master of quicksilver situations, surefire repartee, and animated Pantaloons (characters, not pants), tries also for the sentimental note, the almost-serious scene, and a touch of metaphysics. The entire memory play is evoked by a black maid, three years dead, haunting the scene of a long-past summer. That was when the people she worked for, in their house in the woods, underwent assorted emotional turmoil. They broke off an engagement, rekindled an old love affair, reconciled (a mother and a daughter, a runaway husband and a wife), and, in one case, veered toward death. But death is not absolute here, as the reminiscing ghost of Clemma Diggins declares and, by her presence, demonstrates. What is almost absolute is the awkwardness whenever Simon ventures beyond his forte, repartee.

Mel Winkler and L. Scott Caldwell in *Proposals.*

The awkwardness or, more precisely, contrivance: During the same two days, too many unlikely partners in love, marriage, or mere sex are tossed into the same pot and stirred together, or apart—in this kind of cuisine, everything is possible. We are to savor and digest because the chef has a way with salt and pepper; but spices are not quite the same as ingredients. Otherwise put, a play is of course a construct, but it must not be a contraption.

It all takes place around a cottage in the woodsy Poconos, on a luscious set by John Lee Beatty that, as lighted by Brian MacDevitt, makes you want to move right in. Here lives Burt Hines, the retired workaholic and overachiever, who started eight stores where three would have sufficed, thereby losing the one woman he loved: his wife, Annie, who left to marry another. Inexplicably, daughter Josie grew up adoring her mostly absentee father and furiously resenting her mother. Burt went on loving Annie and never remarried; she, despite a devoted new husband and glamorous European life, continued to love Burt.

Something not dissimilar obtained between Clemma and her husband, who returns after seven years of communicationless absence. And that is just when Annie comes for her annual visit; when Vinnie Bavasi, a colorful Florida mini-mafioso who once danced with Josie, drops in uninvited; when Ken, Josie's sad-sack dropped fiancé, comes whining back for lunch; when Ray, his best friend and Josie's last-year romance, shows up to . . . but you get the picture.

Joe Mantello has staged dexterously, and an accomplished cast, in which Peter Rini shines as Vinnie, plays well together. Still, it would not hurt if Reg Rogers, as Ken, were a little less one-note; if Katie Finneran looked a little more like the model she is supposed to be; and if Suzanne Cryer, as Josie, were a little more appealing. Mostly, though, it is Simon's failure: I could never forget that I was watching a play, or root for any of these characters.

Two Pianos, Four Hands IS A PART-MUSICAL, PART-HISTRIONIC charade by the duo-pianists Ted Dykstra and Richard Greenblatt from Canada, where the show reaped awards and success. Starting as a 25-minute skit, it grew to full, or fulsome, length, though it still feels rather skittish. It chronicles unhappy piano lessons with draconian teachers, and piano competitions in adulthood presided over by hostile adjudicators. Also internecine rivalry one would not expect from a duo-piano team.

Dykstra and Greenblatt take turns playing the tormentors and the tormented with equally broad comedy. We get, in essence, two Victor Borges with half the talent. I refer to the writing and acting; in ivory-tickling, the Canadians hold their own in an eclectic reper-

Photograph by Carol Rosegg.

toire from Bach to Billy Joel. My favorite moment is the admonishment to a lackadaisical pupil from a heavily accented teacher: "You must feel and smell and taste this piss!"

CHEKHOV'S **The Cherry Orchard,** AS PERformed in Russian by Moscow's Sovremennik [Contemporary] Theatre Company, is a production of exemplary ineptitude. Galina Volchek, the artistic and producing director of Sovremennik, which also gave us last year's equally dismal *Three Sisters,* seems to aim at wedding innovation to tradition. So this *Orchard* is to fuse the Stanislavsky–Moscow Art Theater and Andrei Serban–East Village modes, which is like trying to crossbreed watermelons and red currants to make superior cherries.

Take the closing scene. In it, Firs—the ancient, wizened, now also ill butler—is inadvertently locked into the house from which all have departed. He muses that life has slipped by him, worries about his master's catching cold for not wearing his fur coat, and lies down for a little rest. Soon he is inert, probably dead. Outside a strange sound is heard, as of a string breaking; then silence, punctuated by the thud of axes felling the cherry trees. Sure, Chekhov did not want Stanislavsky's ponderousness, and asked for more comedy. But this ending is meant to be wistful, as it captures in sight and sound the passing of an era.

THEATER

Volchek, however, with crashing insensitivity, gives us a still-youngish actor as Firs, very tall and ramrod-straight through his upright closing scene. And not left alone onstage: The entire cast comes merrily waltzing out front, encircling Firs, whose powerful head protrudes above the whirligig. We hear no breaking string, just as we didn't earlier on at the designated moment; we hear instead Rafail Khozaik's monotonously obstreperous music blasting away in amplified bombast.

Benightedness is everywhere: in Vyacheslav Zaitsev's tasteless costumes (e.g., preposterously gaudy men's shoes, ludicrous uniforms for Yasha in chartreuse or shocking pink, a horrid pink-and-green gown for Ranevskaya); in schizophrenic—part surreal, part cloddish—scenery by a pair of designers; and in poor acting across the board, though much of this may be the director's doing. I must say, though, that Marina Neyolova's Ranevskaya, ranging from hysterical infantilism to imbecile cutesiness, is one of the most acute embarrassments I have ever been subjected to.

DIFFERENT, BUT NO LESS HORRIBLE, IS THE Northern Broadsides production of **Antony & Cleopatra** at BAM, another puddle in the New Wave series. Barrie Rutter's

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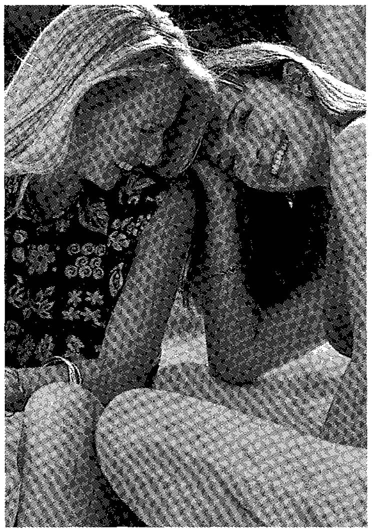

I looked at her again in those jeans, she looked more than great, she looked absolutely gorgeous!

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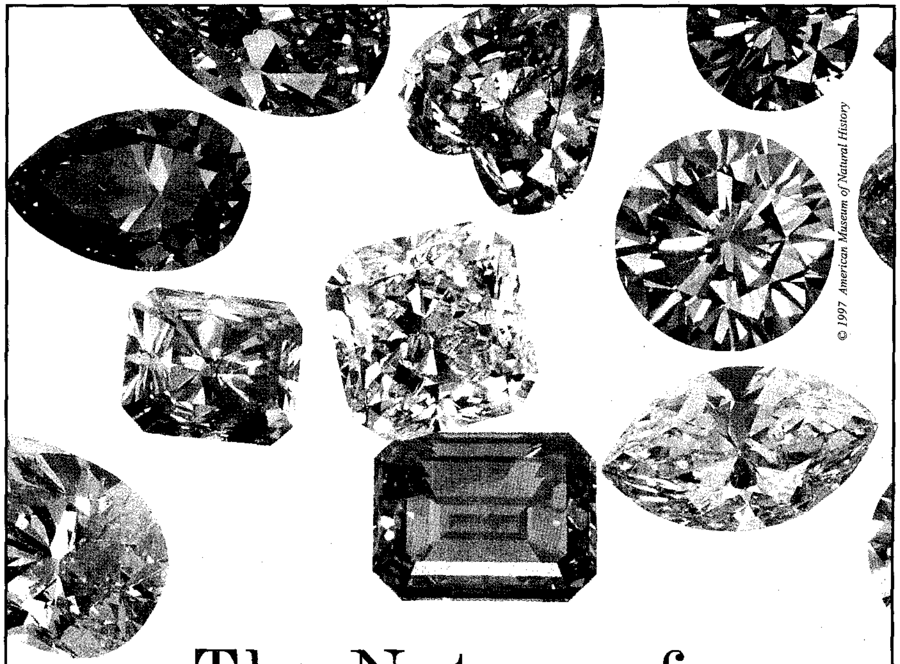
Yorkshire company performs the play in thick Yorkshire accents, not only offensive to the cultivated ear but also thumpingly (pronounced thoompingly) unmusical (pronounced oonmusical). Such parochial regionalism is particularly hapless in a play that encompasses Rome, Egypt, and the rest of the ancient world, and whose story is global, even as its tragic poetry is universal. The yokelish accents reduce it all to pop entertainment, which might work for *The Comedy of Errors* but is a tragic error here.

And it isn't just the accents. Almost everything is played for farce, pandering to demotic belly laughs. Typical is the twitchy Cleopatra of Ishia Bennison, who wears contemporary lounging clothes, hops about like the lead in a flea circus and extrudes words like bubble gum. Rutter, her Antony, is conversely almost too colorless to be noticeable. Conrad Nelson, the sneeringly posturing Octavius, also devised the battle scenes: two bands (orange for Egypt, blue for Rome) at opposite ends of the stage, beating the bejesus out of tin cans, as if auditioning for the road company of *Stomp.*

The mostly bare stage offers no distraction from the uninspired acting by an unprepossessing cast (Octavia, for instance, might be out of *Monty Python*), so, taking my cue from Cleopatra at the battle of Actium, I beat a hasty retreat at intermission.

WHEN DARIO FO RECENTLY WON THE NOBEL Prize for literature, many were wondering why his more deserving compatriot, the late Eduardo De Filippo, was never so honored. On the evidence of the current revival of the latter's *Filumena Marturano,* now entitled **Filumena,** with its translator, Maria Tucci, in the title part, they would stop their wondering. To be sure, I have seen better productions of this and other plays by De Filippo, here and in England, without being bowled over. Ah, say the wonderers, if you could have seen them in Naples, with the author acting in them, in that plummy local dialect; but I haven't, and neither, I suspect, have they.

Granted, the 1964 movie version of the play, *Marriage Italian Style,* was good fun, but what wouldn't have been with Sophia Loren and Marcello Mastroianni under Vittorio de Sica's direction? See Naples and die, goes the saying, but this *Filumena* seems to be the handiwork of people who have reversed the order. Hugh Landwehr's set has a pleasantly Neapolitan look, but that's where authenticity and enjoyment end. At the pace director James Naughton has opted for, and with the brio this cast musters, the locale might as well be Alaska, and the actors, hibernating. Miss Tucci is about as credible as an ex-whore turned signora as Rosie Perez would be as an Eskimo. I can see why *Marturano* was dropped from the title: It sounds too much like *martyrdom.* ■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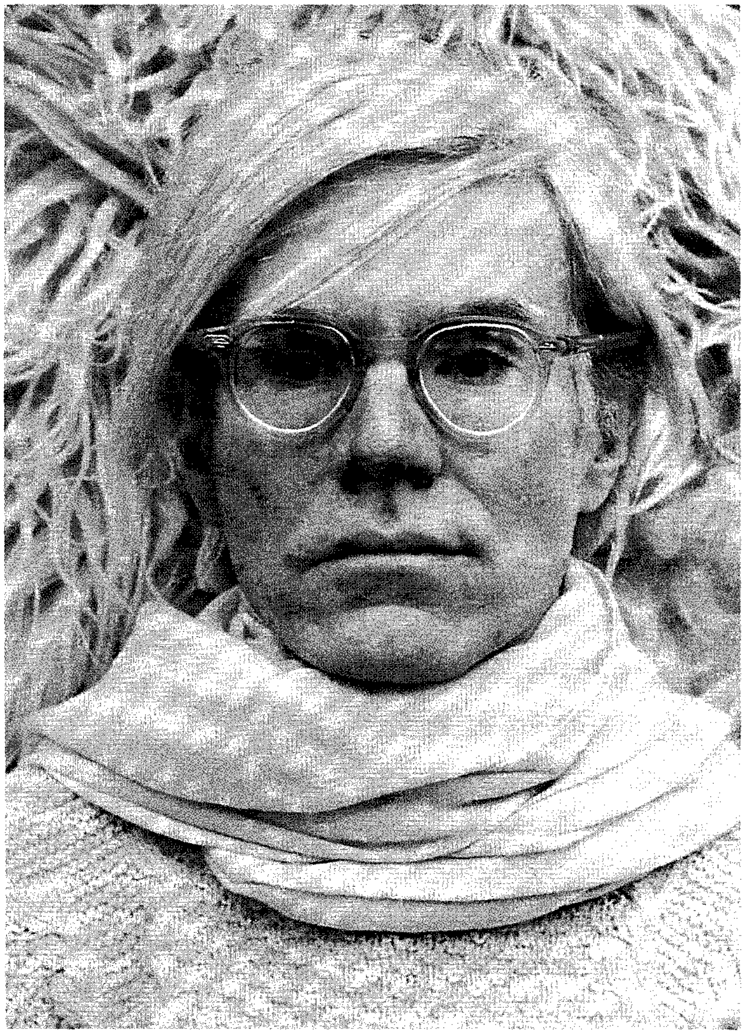
MARK STEVENS

All Yesterday's Parties

At the Whitney, Warhol ephemera—from movie-star photos to eye drops—in a show as deadpan as the artist himself.

ANDY WARHOL IS ONE OF THE GREAT DANDIES OF the twentieth century. His most important creation is not his painting, which is more interesting to talk about than to look at, but the mannered, unforgettable creature with the deadpan "Wow" who became known to a thousand friends as "Andy." Warhol (1928–1987) transformed himself into a revelatory figure for modern society, embodying the essential character of celebrity culture. At the Whitney Museum of American Art, this strangely crafted life is now the subject of an anthropological exhibition called **The Warhol Look/Glamour Style Fashion,** which, among other things, includes photographs, film clips, window displays, copies of *Interview* magazine, and a pair of Clark Gable's shoes. (There are probably more dresses on display than paintings.) Not surprisingly, the show contains much highly diverting material. But its tone is also earnest, reverential, and, in its way, as affectless as Warhol. Like most great dandies, Warhol matters because he has a sting. He is a dark, ambiguous, desolately comic, and profoundly troubling figure. He demands more than a Wow for a Wow.



Roots: Andy Warhol, whose life is now on display at the Whitney, in 1978.

Photograph by Eva Rudling/Sygma.

The show—organized by Mark Francis and Margery King from the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh—opens with some revealing re-creations of department-store windows that Warhol and others designed in the fifties and sixties. In one example from 1961, Warhol placed mannequins wearing stylish dresses in front of Pop paintings, including a before-and-after picture of a woman with a nose job. Art, in short, would now serve as a backdrop to fashion and its flutter. (If Rauschenberg pushed art from the studio to the street, Warhol, always the gentleman, found it a job at Bonwit's.) In Warhol's view, there was no longer a special virtue in the solitary or awkward struggle to find some authentic truth outside the mainstream. No more Jewish noses, please: Art should fit into the world of money, fashion, and celebrity.

Different facets of his obsession with stardom, beginning with a section on "Hollywood Glamour," are carefully presented. As a child, Warhol dreamed of the stars (the Hollywood kind), reading movie mags and sending away for a signed photograph of Shirley Temple. He remained forever the fan: The curators have framed 100 of the photographs of Marilyn Monroe that he collected, including the "source photograph" for his famous silk screen of the actress. One room marks his early career as a commercial artist—he was a brilliant illustrator with an undying love for a well-turned heel—and another his obsession with drag and its transformations.

"The Factory" is evoked—the legendary sixties studio in which Warhol mixed the worlds of art, fashion, rock, and various sexual subcultures. There is a room filled with covers from the celebrity magazine *Interview,* which he founded in 1969. "Uptown/Downtown Style" commemorates the tawdry celebrity swoon of the late seventies and eighties at nightclubs like Studio 54. Warhol's ideas revolve through his era like a perpetual-motion machine. He takes Marilyn Monroe, an iconic figure, and creates a painting of her that, in its turn, becomes an iconic image. The process ends, as it begins, in fashion: Versace makes a dress of Warhol's Marilyn that memorializes the power of both the actress and the artist.

So much is on display—yet in oddly sanitized form. Neither the presentation nor the dry wall text of the exhibition captures the weirdly unsettled, disturbing spirit that Warhol brought to his period. Nowhere is his irreducible strangeness adequately honored. The bled-white pallor and dime-store wigs, the wan smile and haunted eyes. Such *horror vacui:* A phrase like "The Warhol Look" just doesn't cover it. In the section

(continued on page 137)

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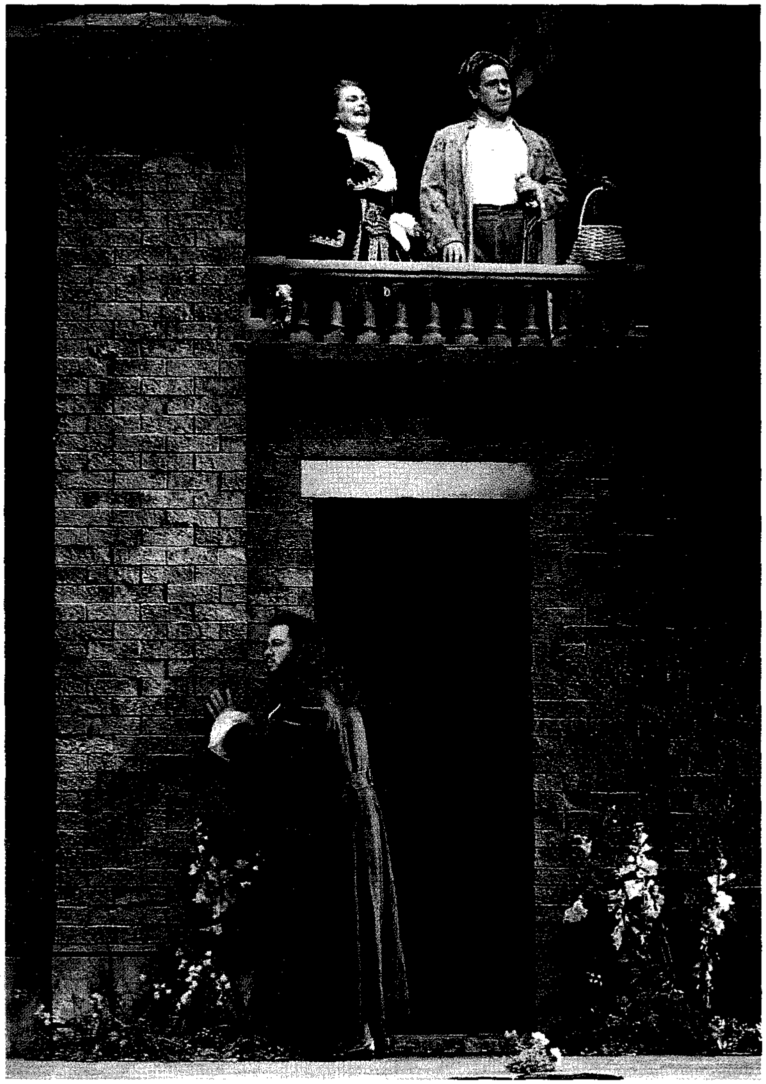
CLASSICAL MUSIC PETER G. DAVIS

Well Handeled

With Handel's 'Xerxes,' the New York City Opera plays to its strengths. But "After Mahler," at BAM, is a strained conceit.



Ascendant talents: Lorraine Hunt and Jan Opalach, top, and David Daniels.

IF THERE IS ANY QUESTION ABOUT THE SORT OF OPERA today's singers respond to best, young Americans in particular, the stunning English-language production of Handel's **Xerxes** now on view at the New York City Opera should settle the issue. Many in the audience at the opening-night performance probably knew what to expect—this latest City Opera import has already traveled far since it was first seen in Santa Fe in 1993—but it's difficult to believe that any previous incarnation could have been more strongly cast or more tightly directed than this flawlessly played ensemble effort.

Xerxes (*Serse* in the original Italian) is often called Handel's only comic opera, a misleading perception that has undone more than one recent production. True, the tone is predominantly light and the characters often get themselves into deliciously absurd situations, but, as usual, Handel was mainly interested in exploring human behavior in all its diversity. The tangled web of love relationships is just as complex as in the composer's other operas, but here the participants can laugh at themselves even as they suffer from the usual pangs of rejection, guilt, self-doubt, and sexual frustration on their way to self-awareness. The action was originally set in ancient Persia, but time and place are irrelevant—these people belong to us as much as to Handel's audiences. Director Stephen Wadsworth places the opera in an imagined England of the 1730s, a device that perfectly suits the sophisticated nature of a fluid score that seldom pauses for breath.

Lorraine Hunt is nothing short of sensational in the title role, a performance that should at last put this huge vocal talent at the center of New York's operatic life—if indeed that is where such an independent-minded singer even cares to be. Not only does she sing the music with astonishing bravura, tonal radiance, and expressive color, but her stage presence is positively electric, communicating every emotional nuance of this impulsive, slightly befuddled, hopelessly lovesick young ruler. Just as impressive is countertenor David Daniels as Xerxes' brother, Arsamene. His role is less flashy, but his singing fairly seethes with quiet intensity without ever compromising a sure command of the idiom or the sheer beauty of his voice. Both men are in hot pursuit of the sorely beset Romilda—Amy Burton, who matches their theatrical energy and vocal virtuosity note for note. There are no minor parts in a Handel opera, and no one in this cast—Susannah Waters (Atalanta), Jennifer Lane (Amastre), James Bobick (Elviro), and Jan Opalach (Ariodate)—gives a minor performance.

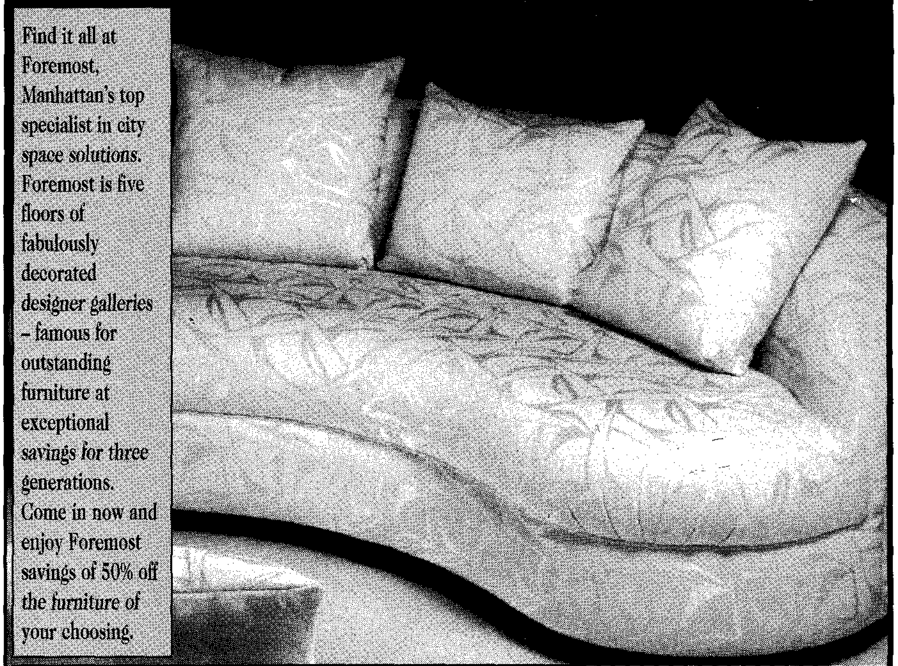
Even though Handel has considerably loosened the strict forms of Baroque opera in *Xerxes,* the work still needs a director who understands the conventions and how they function. Wadsworth does, and his stage is consistently animated by wittily inventive but never intrusive movement. George Manahan conducts a refreshing musical performance that is stylish without calling attention to itself, and the attractive sets—a Georgian country exterior designed by Thomas Lynch with matching period costumes by Martin Pakledinaz—provide the cast with a comfortable space in which to give their very best. Handel can scarcely have ever had it so good.

I SUPPOSE THE **Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra's** FIRST PROgram of the season, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, needed a selling title—all BPO concerts get one these days. But "After Mahler" seemed a pretentious if not downright meaningless label to slap on three such disparate pieces as the extended Adagio movement from Mahler's unfinished Tenth Symphony; Claude Vivier's

Photograph by Carol Rosegg.

brief tone poem *Zipangu* (the name given to Japan at the time of Marco Polo); and Sofia Gubaidulina's *Stimmen . . . verstummen,* a 35-minute "symphony" in twelve movements whose title roughly translates as "Voices . . . grow silent." The musical influence of Mahler on a diversity of twentieth-century composers has been vast, but the phenomenon can hardly be adequately examined in a single evening, even one supplemented by preconcert chats and an afternoon "inter play" of chamber music. The orchestra's conductor, Robert Spano, wisely shied away from stressing any heavy thematic significance that might link the three works, pointing out that they are only subliminally related to make up a program that "has a sonic sense to it."

I'm willing to buy that, as long as the music is allowed to make its own statement unaccompanied by a lot of gaseous sophistry and special pleading. There was plenty of that in the program notes, but even purple prose aside, I found myself unstirred by the whole affair. The Mahler torso, of course, is a repertory piece by now, and Spano presented it cogently and expressively, if without the perfervid instrumental shimmer that the score needs to make its full emotional impact. Vivier's fourteen-minute work was written in 1980, three years before his violent death in Paris at the hands of a 19-year-old youth. According to critic Paul Griffiths, Vivier strove to write "gay music"—i.e., works that would renounce the conventional, "male" attributes of Western music (determination, purposefulness, independence) and would instead "hover," "glisten," and "be music of angels." This is an interesting if rather fanciful notion, but unfortunately *Zipangu* makes a weak case for it, inhabiting a pallid sound world more disheveled and inarticulate than glistening or angelic. Mystical music from eastern Europe is the rage right now, and Sofia Gubaidulina is among the trend's more fashionable practitioners. Of course, what strikes some ears as uplifting spiritual ecstasy will impress others as avant-garde kitsch, and I'm afraid I sit in the latter camp. No one would doubt this 66-year-old Russian-born composer's sincerity or charisma after watching her choreographed performance of the "cadenza for conductor" from *Stimmen . . . verstummen* on a recent BBC documentary—an extraordinary moment when the man/woman leader on the podium, using gestural patterns precisely notated in the score, presumably aspires to godlike status. Yet all the slithering string sonorities, blatty brass chords, and hurly-burly orchestral tuttis lack any compelling substance. Worse, they sound secondhand—techniques that have already been explored to far greater effect by Ligeti and Lutoslawski. Surely more of musical significance has happened "after Mahler" than this. ■



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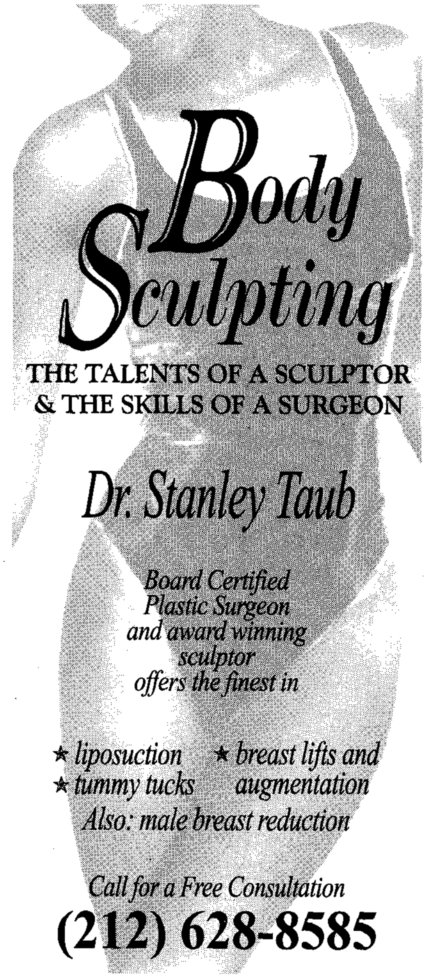

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DANCE TOBI TOBIAS

A Few Steps Removed

Pina Bausch, Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, and Momix stretch the usual definitions—but not always our imagination.

BUT IS IT DANCING? PEOPLE HAVE NO DOUBT BEEN asking that question plaintively since Terpsichore came up with her first radical idea, and have only gradually—and grudgingly—accepted deviant manifestations of the art. In our century alone, dance heroes like Isadora Duncan, Martha Graham, George Balanchine, and Merce Cunningham had a tough time bringing audiences round to their iconoclastic or progressive ways of thinking. Sometimes, though, the answer to the is-it-dancing query must be a firm no—when, say, rhythmic motion and a sense of the body in space and time are not central to a work's concerns.

At BAM, De Keersmaeker's *Woud.*

Photograph by Dan Rest.

According to these guidelines, Pina Bausch's extravaganzas for her Tanztheater Wüppertal, Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker's for her Rosas, and the programs of Momix, led by Moses Pendleton—all seen in these parts lately—certainly can't be termed dance; they're closer to theater, distantly related to that murkily defined genre, performance art, and, in the case of Momix, wannabe cousins of circus and vaudeville. They get previewed and reviewed by the dance press because the artists creating the material got their start in the dance field and, I suspect, because the theater critics refuse to be bothered with their stuff. The general public—at least that segment of it with a yen to be found at the cutting edge—enjoys the spectacle (especially when it's transgressive) and imbues it, as it is prompted to do, with notions about the human condition and the meaning of life.

The world of **Pina Bausch** (Brooklyn Academy of Music, October 3–5 and 7–11) consists of semi-inscrutable, absurdist vignettes involving, in equal parts, physical messiness on a grand scale, cruelty (usually sexual, often misogynist), and intimations of doomsday. Clothing (vintage-style gowns, stiletto heels, underwear) and foodstuffs, along with spoken text and screams, play secondary but significant roles. The effect of this mix is heavily dependent on inordinate length and repetition. While Bausch's natural modes are the nihilistic, the melodramatic, and the Dadaist, the three-hour work offered this time, *Der Fensterputzer* (*The Window Washer*), might be her take on musical comedy. Inspired by a sojourn in Hong Kong—during which, apparently, kitsch popular culture made the greatest impression on her—the piece boasts souped-up production values and makes fitful attempts to be lighthearted. Both elements look like ploys to engage spectators who might be discouraged by Bausch's customary bleakness.

Ironically, this work includes an earnest attempt to incorporate pure dancing. It's punctuated by solos of abstract movement that have no clear contextual reason for being there; maybe the performers, deprived by most of the Bausch repertoire from exercising their formal dance training, got this opportunity written into their contracts. Their delivery of the material was concentrated and energetic; the choreography itself, puerile. Bausch, it would seem, is more compelling when she avoids dancing for its own sake and just puts on her unclassifiable, angst-ridden show.

The Brussels-based **Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker** followed Bausch into BAM (October 22, 24, and 25) with *Woud* (*Forest*), a kind of abstract psychodrama employing movement instead of words. Unfortunately, the movement, though avidly executed, is undistinguished, and the point being made—something, I assume, about love's invariably turning into loss—is hardly new or newly articulated. The only element of the piece to haunt the imagination is the suave set design, with its maneuvering of giant, silvery birch trunks and its evocation of cool moonlight. The most effective segment of the show is its introductory film of De Keersmaeker herself—playing an increasingly distraught woman reciting a folk tale about a disobedient little boy and the recalcitrant forces of nature summoned to punish him. As the woman grows more and more frantic, the landscape lurches in perspective and content—from deep, dark forest to a highway at night, with the headlights of oncoming cars gleaming like the eyes of predatory beasts. The viewer has plenty of time to mull over De Keersmaeker's rapprochement of Freud and the brothers Grimm in a long, dry section of *Woud* that unintentionally reveals its dearth of pure choreographic invention.

The scores De Keersmaeker assembled as her accompaniment include intriguingly related works by Alban Berg, Wagner, and Schoenberg. The choice of Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht* inevitably reminds a dance-goer of Antony Tudor, who used it so evocatively for his ballet *Pillar of Fire*. Now, *there* was a choreographer who was able to make movement both compelling in itself and dramatically potent—to say nothing of profoundly musical.

Led by a founding member of Pilobolus, **Momix** (City Center, October 28–November 2) offers a similar bag of physical and visual tricks with pretensions to higher significance. A Momix program comprises myriad short "numbers" that fall into a paltry few categories. First among these is the Live Comic Strip. Physical and visual jokes that small children find funny (the ridiculous and the gross combined with pratfalls of some violence) are blended with elements (wit, references to high culture) that are ostensibly the province of adults. The grown-up, I assume, is being urged to bring the kids or to rediscover his Inner Child. Next comes the Soft Porn item, in which the Momixers' beautifully muscular bodies are stripped to the waist and bathed in warm, low light to perform swoony acrobatics. Children of all ages can watch this stuff without harm, unless they're gullible enough to believe it seriously represents eroticism. Then there's The Stunt: A soloist rings changes on a single feat—simultaneously revolving and rotating, dervish-style, say, or whirling a giant hula-hoop. The Stunt, which would become stultifying after the first twenty seconds of reiteration if presented in undecorated form, is invariably glossed with New Age prettiness; Momix, in general, favors large white balloons—and the saccharine mind-set they encourage.

An avid audience exists for Moses Pendleton's brand of fun. That I'm not a member of it is pretty much irrelevant. What gives me pause, however, is that the fans of Momix think they're seeing real dancing, something you might call art—or even honest popular entertainment. ■

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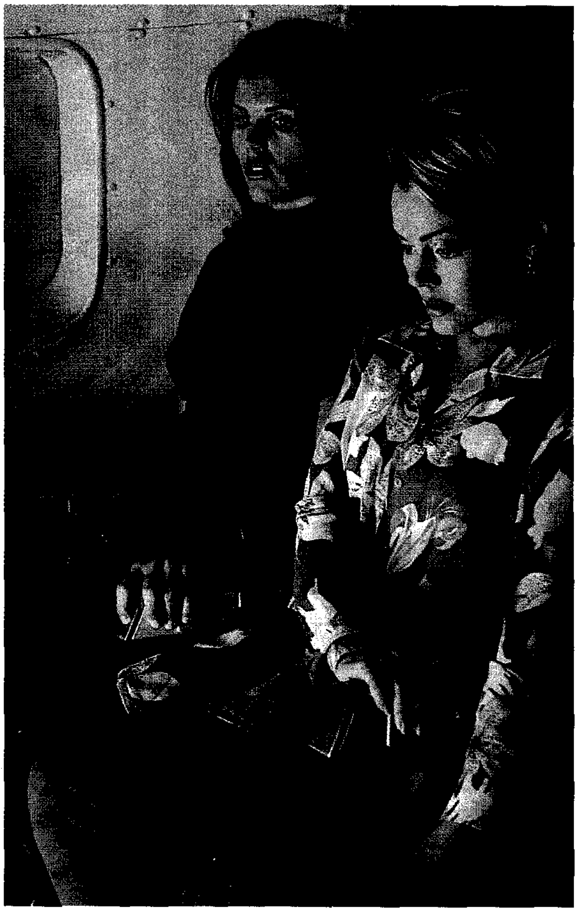
Gone Fission

A crazed physicist, a homemade warhead, ill-mannered media types—look at 'Medusa's Child' and you might just turn to stone.

NEVER MIND THAT THE BEEP-BEEP WARHEAD THAT a loony-tunes nuclear physicist (John Glover) patches from scraps of spare plutonium in his South Florida garage, fine-tunes to resonate with a pacemaker wired to the weak heart of his ex-wife (Gail O'Grady), and parcel-posts to the Pentagon in the cargo hold of ex–Navy pilot Vincent Spano's 737 jet during the first half-hour of **Medusa's Child** (Sunday and Thursday, November 16 and 20; ABC) could vaporize maybe 2 million Americans. What's really hairy about Medusa is its ability to unleash an electromagnetic pulse that eats computer chips for breakfast. And without computer chips, as we are fearfully informed by one of the many hyperventilators in this heavy-breathing mini-series, "our economy would be destroyed!" Even ATMs!



Bombshells: Lori Loughlin, left, and Gail O'Grady, in flight and a heartbeat away from death, in *Medusa's Child*.

Photograph by Michael Tighe/ABC.

I must admit that this idea—a neutron bomb on banking—appeals to me, the more so after watching superstitious congresspersons hang on every gnomic word that fell from the lips of Alan Greenspan, as if the chairman of the Federal Reserve were Keeper of the Hermetic Secrets of the Sacred Science of the Pharaohs.

Anyway, it's Spano's bad luck that on his very first cargo haul out of Miami he'll have onboard a flight engineer (Kevin Dillon) who's just had a fight with his wife, as well as a "science babe" and bad-weather junkie (Lori Loughlin, in the Helen Hunt–Jodie Foster role) who can't wait to mix it up with Hurricane Sigrid. Also, a fugue-state O'Grady, who happens to have been sleeping with the CIA (Jack Coleman), and the thermonuclear Medusa, whose economy-destroying side effects are of such interest that our armed forces disregard President Martin Sheen's orders to dump the chip-sucker somewhere over the Atlantic. To this hurricane of emotions add the troubled eye of an FBI agent (Christopher Noth) as phlegmatic as Glover is bonkers. If that's not fraught enough, lovely Lori must surgically remove the pacemaker from pale Gail, who may be a terrorist, before virile Vincent and qualm-racked Kevin can heave Medusa overboard, through a hole they have blown in the 737.

I should also mention a subplot involving the usual vampire media, print and electronic. So eager are they to panic the public that they eavesdrop on the wireless communications of the crisis managers, bother busy scientists at home with embarrassing questions about Armageddon, and interrupt our regularly scheduled programs. Although this bad behavior has been a cliché of TV disaster flicks for more than a decade, we are likely to see more of it now that the paparazzi have been blamed for hounding Princess Di to death before she ever got a chance to date Donald Trump. Personally, I prefer the media telling us everything the government would rather we didn't suspect, instead of the government leaking on us only the little it prefers we know. But as much as this media-bashing is a shameless pander, it's also the revenge of the network entertainment divisions on the network news divisions.

PERHAPS YOU ARE ASKING yourself how bad **Bella Mafia** could be (Sunday and Tuesday, November 16 and 18; 9 to 11 P.M.; CBS), with Vanessa Redgrave, Nastassja Kinski, Ileana Douglas, and Jennifer Tilly starring in a mini-series adaptation of a novel by the Lynda La Plante who gave us the first *Prime Suspect*. You wouldn't ask yourself this question if you had actually read any of Lynda La Plante's novels. You'd wonder instead how come *Prime Suspect* was so good. Briefly, the Sicilian don Dennis Farina refuses to allow an American don, Tony Lo Bianco, to import drugs into squeaky-clean Palermo. So Tony kidnaps and kills Dennis's favorite son, before he can matriculate at Harvard. So Dennis, his wife, Vanessa, and their surviving

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Illustration by Steven Salerno

sons swear an oath of revenge. But then all the men in Vanessa's life, including her grandsons, are mass-murdered on a single bloody night. So it's up to the Mafia widows to do their own dirty work. This is especially hard on Nastassja, for Greek and Viennese reasons I won't go into here, except to say that Sophocles wrote in vehement dithyrambs, and Freud as a German stylist was up there with Nietzsche, whereas La Plante has read too many comic books. Tilly tries to be funny; Douglas seems to have wanted to amuse, as well, but decided against it—leaving Vanessa to carry the heavy water as if she were a Borgia and Nastassja to skulk and stomp as if she were a Manchurian candidate. There is a word for this sort of thing, and that word is *dreadful.*

EARLY ON IN **Don King: Only in America** (Saturday, November 15; 8 to 10 P.M.; HBO) there is a riff on the word *motherfucker* worthy of either Lenny Bruce or Don DeLillo channeling Lenny Bruce. At this moment, we realize not only that Ving Rhames, as the boxing promoter with the electrocuted hair—the manslaughtering, street-hustling P. T. Barnum–Mephistopheles of a meat market in upward mobility—will be just fine impersonating a character already so far gone in self-parody that real life no longer seems to apply but also that Rhames will in some ways improve on Don King himself. He will hustle the camera. Executive producer Thomas Carter and screenwriter Kario Salem, relying heavily on Jack Newfield's exposé of King and the sleazy world in which he glitzes, do not admire the man. But they have structured their movie so that King, in a stylized ring with a quick-change light show behind him as if obedient to the motions of his cigar, gets a chance to comment on and to criticize scenes we've just seen. At one point, he even savages HBO, the channel we happen to be watching. To these subversions of the authority of the production, Ving Rhames brings such energy, cunning, and linguistic inventiveness, and plays the race card with such a flourish, that we shush ourselves.

They're all here, from Ali and Frazier and Tyson to Mobutu. And so is the multi-million-dollar underworld of mobsters and thugs. As the decades pass, only the pigment of the hustle changes. Vondie Curtis-Hall helps, and you will notice in passing the likes as well of Lou Rawls. But Rhames is the astonishment, having evolved from the lonesome stranger in *Rosewood* who led the women and children out of a Seminole swamp to safety from the Klan, to this fright-wig spectacle; from the night-rider terror, the rope, the hood, the burning cross, and the sorrow songs, to a merchandising of black flesh in the name of black capitalism—his highness of hustle an Aga-Con. ■

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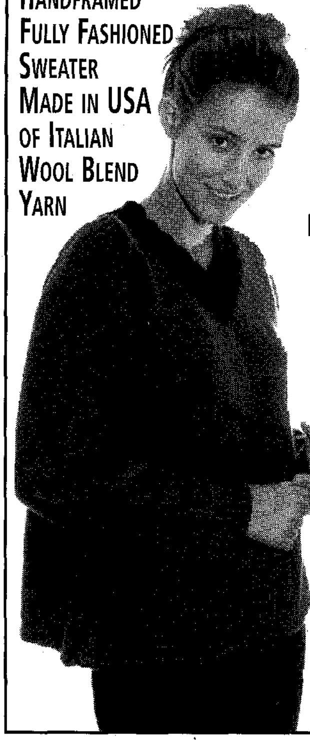

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Miss Saigon?

Mint corsages gussy up Vietnamese street food at Cyclo, in the East Village; across town, Annam hits the Ho Chi Minh trail, too.

HANOI IS A WALKING CITY. EVEN WHEN WE WERE lost, we were never really lost. Despite erratic street numbers and back-alley food stalls, we'd actually found the tiny storefront famous for its báhn cuô—meat and mushrooms wrapped in a slippery rice crêpe and sprinkled with shallot crisps. I remember dipping the just-off-the-griddle roll into a cup of nuoc mam, the salty fish sauce of Vietnam, feeling triumphant. In no time, we'd gone bananas for this country's street food, the boisterous seafood soups of the marketplace, the exquisitely fresh spring rolls hawked by itinerant sidewalk peddlers, the sweet caramelized barbecued-pork bits served with rice noodles and incendiary green chilies in a side-street stall. Even given the swift sproutings of Vietnamese canteens here, it's not easy to indulge these new cravings. Our summer rolls too often taste like shredded cardboard. You have to ask for nuoc mam. And while it's true that not all Southeast Asia greenery grows here, a few odd sprigs can't substitute for the customary bowl of leaves—mint, basil, shiso, cilantro—that go in the soup or get tucked into the myriad rolls.

That's why I'm pleased to discover **Cyclo,** a narrow storefront painted iceberg-lettuce green with its namesake bicycle-rickshaw parked outside. All it takes is two or three tastes to know we're not at another slam-dash Chinatown luncheonette: The greaseless crackle of spring rolls. The mysterious nuttiness of minced monkfish to scoop up on broken shards of sesame cracker. The grilled sugar-cane shrimp to wrap in soft rice paper with mint leaves and dab with peanut sauce. This is street food with style and finesse. A request for chilies brings a peppery hot paste that satisfies the need for high-risk heat. Bring pals and taste all eight appetizers. True, the mushroom-filled ravioli pale next to memories of Hanoi's definitive version, but they'll do for now. And I love the tempura'd yam and eggplant to wrap in lettuce with chili-lime sauce. I'm not sure why the spicy green-papaya salad is flecked with beef jerky, but I'm not complaining. Pork or chicken comes grilled on angel's-hair noodles. Shrimp and silken, almost melting tendrils of squid are tossed with rice noodles in a fragrant satay broth. When it comes to rare sirloin in slices with string beans and basil, New York trumps Hanoi. Skip the banana smothered in coconut-tapioca pudding, knowing that Veniero's with its mythic cheesecake waits one block south.

True, Cyclo's menu is modestly curt, evolving slowly, growing cautiously. Ginger-roasted duck with spicy ginger-lime sauce just went daily. After a relentless search, partner Steven Duong found a New Orleans farmer growing la lot, a rice-paddy leaf essential to tamarind-shrimp soup. "I'm so thrilled I can get it here," he cries. "I was thinking I'd have to sneak it in and grow it myself." He's already importing the unique charcoal-roasted coffee beans of Vietnam. Duong was doing double duty at Le Colonial when he opened Cyclo with his partner, chef Hoang Lieng, who still races back and forth from Le Refuge uptown to his kitchen here. The sconce shades are made from U.S.-government maps of Vietnam, "used to strategize during the war," says Duong. Soon, he plans to tour the homeland he left at 13 to collect recipes and study imperial cuisine. Last week, he had a longing for the turmeric-marinated fish of Hanoi's famous La Vong restaurant. "Come home," said his mother, on the phone in Michigan. "I'll make it and give you the recipe."

Cyclo, 203 First Avenue, near 13th Street (673-3957). Dinner, Sunday through Thursday from 5:30 p.m. to 11 p.m., Friday and Saturday till midnight. A.E., D.C., M.C., V.

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Paddy shack: Cyclo on First Avenue.

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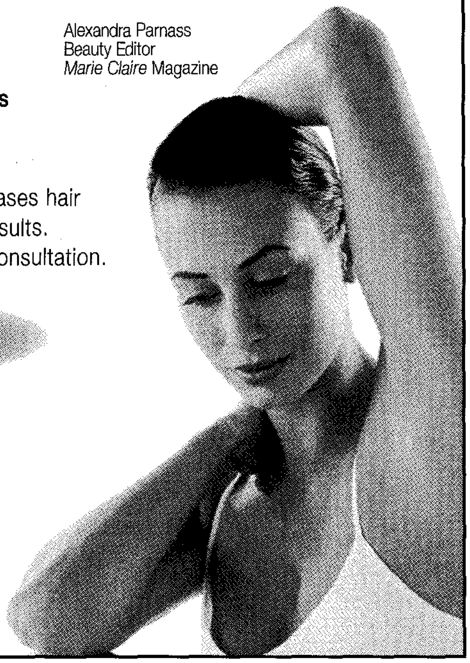

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Annam IS BRIAN BUI'S TROPHY, SIGNALING the success of Mekong in SoHo, and it's even more ambitious and just as good. From Carmine Street, nothing says Vietnam—not the dark-wood-mullioned windows, the velvet curtain swags, or the bare red brick and potted greenery. Inside, there are vintage family photographs, a Buddhist shrine just in front of the garden (now closed for winter), and a fish tank. "Won't that big ugly monsterfish eat the little goldfish?" I ask. "Of course," the manager says matter-of-factly. "That's what the arowana fish eats. There were 50 of them two weeks ago." Now look: only 20.

In the Manhattan food chain, we get to feast on luscious grilled beef rolled tightly in shiso, tangy beef tartare, another version of ravioli (plumped with shrimp, jícama, and shiitakes), and calamari stuffed and steamed. Fine shrimp and chicken salads are quite similar, though the first has the tang of green papaya, and cabbage is the underpinning of the second. Meaty spring rolls are cleanly fried, as is the whole shrimp in its crinkly nightgown with bits of pork and clear noodles.

The waiter must have ESP, lugging a second table over to contain the feast. He counsels against the filet mignon, urging us to get lemongrass-marinated grilled beef on a skewer instead. Moist and flavorful, the meat gets rolled in tortillalike rice crêpes with mint and cilantro. Most everything—splendid beef on vermicelli, even my favorite, crisp stuffed pancake—is supposed to be wrapped in leafy green lettuce with various dipping sauces. I haven't been so busy wrapping since last Christmas.

The Nha Trang–born Bui abandoned corporate finance for restaurants. "My parents screamed, but I always wanted to be like Rick in *Casablanca*." The menu's French tics—the au beurre and the odd baguette—betray brother Sonny's stint at Tandinh in Paris. Having fled Vietnam at 8, Brian Bui was astonished last year to find omelets and French bread even in remote villages of the Mekong Delta. "The steamed tilefish of Hanoi—oh, my God," he says. "And the greens, so amazing." He plans to go back in April, determined to cover the country from north to south. Two of his American wait staff have already done it. Funny how some of our most passionate Vietnamese restaurateurs are discovering the food of Vietnam at exactly the same moment we are.

Annam, 38–40 Carmine Street (243-8428). Lunch, Monday through Friday from noon to 4 p.m. Dinner, Monday through Thursday 5 p.m. to 11 p.m., Friday till midnight. Lunch and dinner, Saturday 1 p.m. to midnight, Sunday till 10:30 p.m. A.E., D.C., M.C., V. ■

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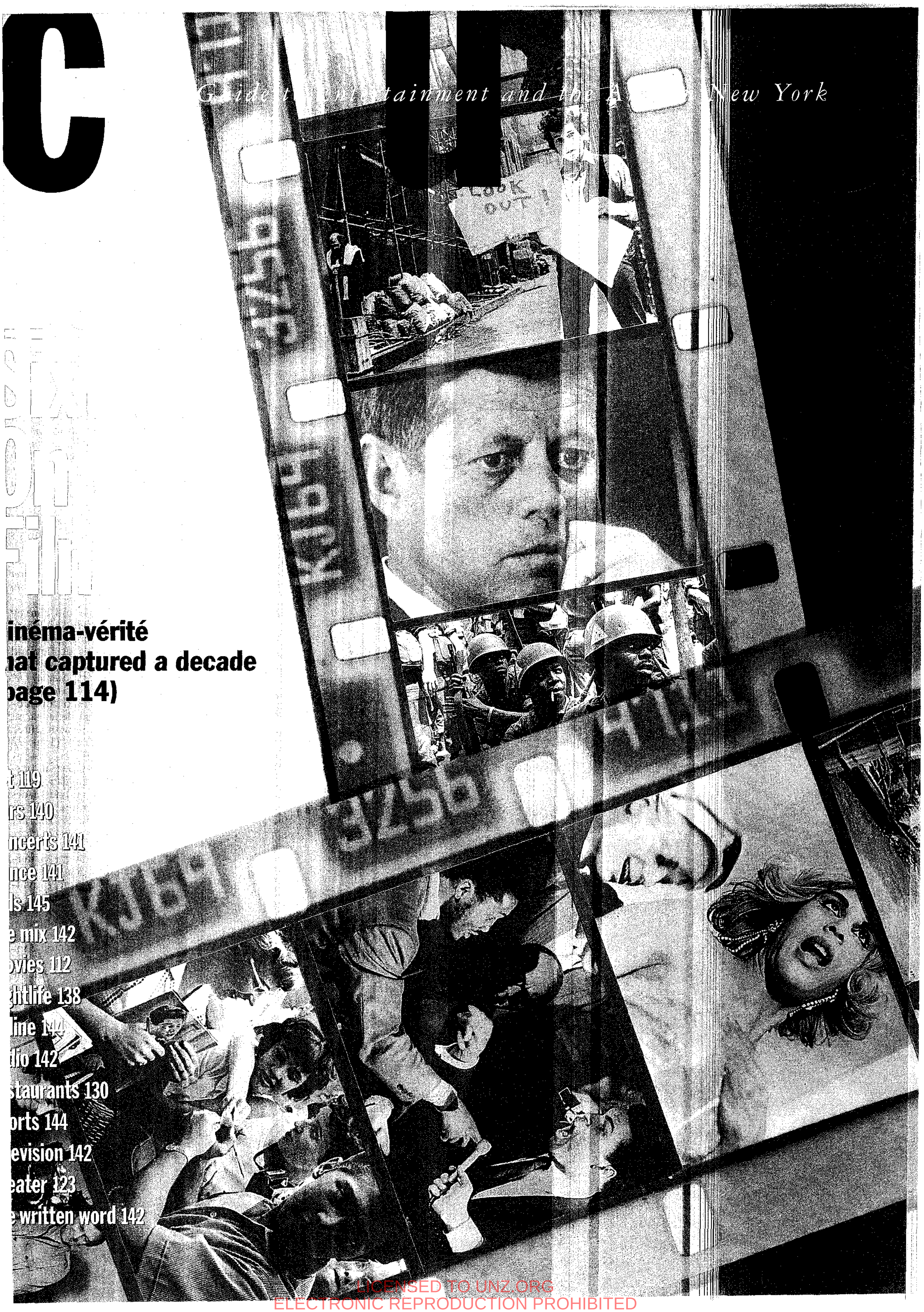
Guide to Entertainment and the Arts in New York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movies

Kiss or Kill...Sixties Ciné Radicals...The Mouse

Ground Rules:

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by David Denby...A ★ denotes a current release that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element...Reviews are followed by the Manhattan theaters where the film is playing.

New Films

Bean—British comedian Rowan Atkinson is Bean. (1 hr. 30 mins.; PG-13) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea; 72nd St. East; 86th Street; Lincoln Square; Kingsway; Pavilion Theatre.*

Beaumarchais: The Scoundrel—Fabrice Luchini is the womanizing Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais, the playwright (*The Barber of Seville*) who also ran arms for the American Revolution. Directed by Edouard Molinaro. (1 hr. 56 mins.; NR) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

★**Boogie Nights**—*Boogie Nights*, the second feature by 26-year-old writer-director Paul Thomas Anderson (*Hard Eight* arrived earlier this year), is a kind of ragamuffin epic about the San Fernando Valley porn industry. Much of the film is funny and touching, and even rather sweet. It's a good but not great movie—a movie conceived realistically, without falsifying glamour, but without great insight or excitement either. The movie stretches from 1977 to 1984—the disco-and-cocaine period of bell-bottom L.A.—and covers the varying fortunes of a small group of porn actors, filmmakers, and hangers-on gathered under the wing of Jack Horner (Burt Reynolds), an avuncular producer who likes to have people hang out at his house. Horner takes one look at Eddie Adams (Mark Wahlberg), a busboy in a Valley club, and decides that Eddie has got the stuff. He picks up Eddie by using one of his minor actresses, Rollergirl (Heather Graham), who strips down to her skates and jumps on Eddie at Horner's house, while Jack, appraising, watches the show. Mark Wahlberg may have something in his pants, but there's no gleam in his eye. What Wahlberg does best is convey Eddie's desperation. His Eddie wants success and money, but he doesn't desire anyone; he wants other people to desire him. In Wahlberg's scenes with Julianne Moore—who plays Amber Waves, a female porn star—Moore does most of the work. Moore, a great actress, has red, red lips and lambent flesh, yet her eyes are anxious; she's a kind of neurotic siren, always available but frantically unhappy. *Boogie Nights* is made up of many vignettes, and while Anderson is a good observer, he hasn't really shaped the screenplay. The vignettes don't comment on one another. The movie has its giddy moments, but in the end it is peculiarly depressing. Anderson reports on the porn industry, but he doesn't satisfy our curiosity about this pleasure-driven but pleasureless, fascinating but wan way of life. (Denby; 10/20/97) (2 hrs. 37 mins.; R) *Village East; 19th Street East; Murray Hill Cinemas; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Kingsway; Pavilion Theatre; Movieworld.*

Bugis Street—A small-town girl comes of age in a notorious Singapore brothel. (1 hr. 40 mins; NR) *Opens Friday at Village East.*

Critical Care—An engaging morality tale about the current state of the health-care system, played out in a critical-care unit among doctors, nurses, lawyers, and insurance companies. Starring James Spader, Helen Mirren, Kyra Sedgwick, Albert Brooks, and Anne Bancroft. Directed by Sidney Lumet. (1 hr. 49 mins.; R) *Quad Cinema; Chelsea West; Coronet; 84th Street.*

The Deli—A low-key comedy about a week in the life of a New York deli. The ensemble cast includes brilliant turns by Frank Vincent, Debi Mazar, and Heather Matarazzo. With Ice-T, A. J. Benza, David Johansen, Jerry Stiller, and Heavy D. (1 hr. 38 mins.; NR) *Sutton.*

★**Devil's Advocate**—Al Pacino stars as John Milton, the head of an international law firm in New York. Milton recruits a hotshot lawyer from small-town Florida who has never lost a case—Kevin Lomax (Keanu Reeves), who arrives in the dazzling big city with his beautiful wife, Mary Ann (Charlize Theron), and receives the best of everything. Pacino does the grandstanding; Reeves holds the movie together. Reeves is so serious a young man that he makes succumbing to temptation sexier than a more relaxed actor ever could. The movie conveys the idea that anyone who wants success in New York must be ready to sell his soul. Kevin takes on the case of a big-deal real-estate developer (Craig T. Nelson) who may have killed his wife, but as he becomes absorbed in the case he neglects Mary Ann, who gets set upon by Satan and his minions. Parts of the movie are disturbingly sensual, and the scenes of deluxe New York life, conventional as they are, might easily impress a small-town boy as the height of sophistication. At the end, however, when Pacino takes over and delivers his Devil's sermon at the top of his lungs, and Keanu shouts back at him, we go beyond entertaining gothic kitsch into some never-never land of movie awfulness. Hellfires burn, bodies writhe, and the movie goes up in flames. But *The Devil's Advocate* is fun for a while. (Denby; 10/27/97) (2 hrs. 20 mins.; R) *Village East; 19th Street East; 34th Street Showplace; Astor Plaza; New York Twin; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; Nova; Olympia Theatre; Kingsway; Pavilion Theatre; Plaza Twin; Main Street Cinemas; Movieworld.*

Eve's Bayou—A little girl in Louisiana discovers the mix of fact, fiction, and fantasy in her family's lives. Starring Samuel L. Jackson, Lynn Whitfield, Diahann Carroll, Branford Marsalis, and Kasi Lemmons. (1 hr. 49 mins.; R) *Waverly; 19th Street East; 86th Street; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square.*

Fairytale—A True Story—Peter O'Toole and Harvey Keitel star as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Harry Houdini in this story of two young girls who claim they've photographed fairies in England during World War I. (1 hr. 39 mins.; PG) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea; Guild 50th Street; Sutton; UA East; Lincoln Square; Pavilion Theatre; Movieworld.*

Fast, Cheap & Out of Control—The stories of four obsessives—a lion tamer, a topiary gardener, a rat specialist, and a robot designer—are documented by Errol Morris (*The Thin Blue Line*). (1 hr. 22 mins.; PG) *Film Forum.*

The Full Monty—Robert Carlyle stars as Gaz, an out-of-work steelworker in Sheffield, England, who rounds up his unemployed friends and persuades them to put together a male strip troupe. Directed by Peter Cattaneo. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; 19th Street East; Coronet; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

★**Gattaca**—*Gattaca*, the first feature by the writer-director Andrew Niccol, is about a genetic tyranny of the future in which society is rigidly divided into humans perfectly engineered and those known as faith babies—people with the ordinary mix of strengths and physical susceptibilities. Ethan Hawke, clean-shaven and very fit, is one of the latter, who nevertheless penetrates to the inner sanctum of the perfect ones. Always on the verge of being discovered, he meets a kind of mate in the elongated and smirking Uma Thurman, who, like him, has an ailing heart. Gattaca is not pop science fiction in the *Star Wars* mold but a serious and intelligent movie, with an inexpensive but handsome design, good music by Michael Nyman, and perceptive observations of such all-too-human elements as friendship and rivalries between brothers. (Denby; 11/10/97) (1 hr. 52 mins.; PG-13) *Village East; 19th Street East; 86th Street East; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square.*

Grizzly Mountain—Dan Haggerty is back as the beloved, bearded Grizzly Adams. This time, he's

Opening Outback Rebs

In the Aussie thriller *Kiss or Kill*, Matt Day and Frances O'Connor (below) are criminally inclined lovers running from both the law and a pedophiliac sports hero named the Zipper—and leaving a trail of bodies behind them. Opens Friday.

going back in time to save the wilderness from evil developers—with the help of the animals, the children, and his Native American friends. (1 hr. 36 mins.; G) *Embassy 2–4.*

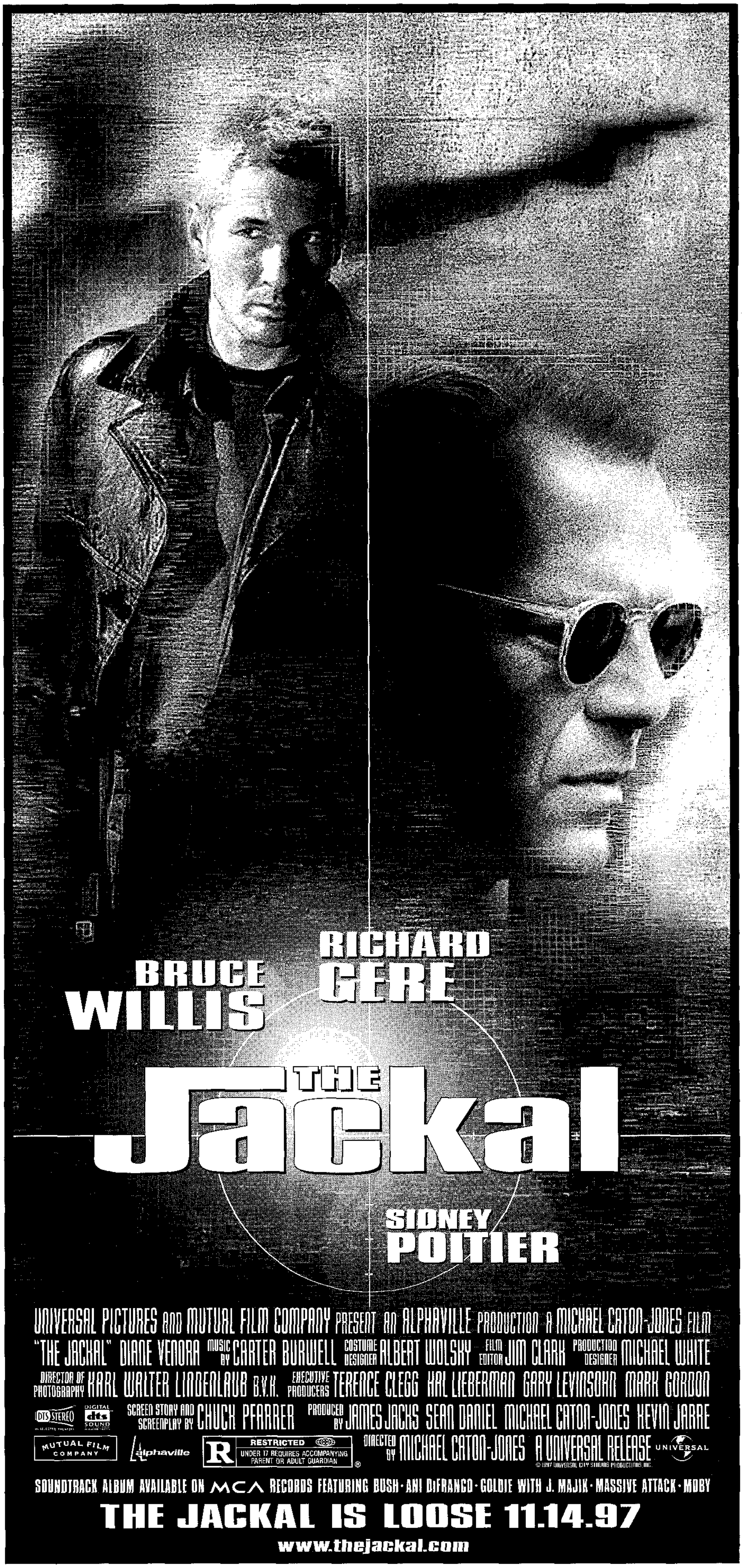
Gummo—*Gummo* has no plot and only a few recurring characters. It is hell to sit through; it's boring and redundant, a series of mock outrages. Harmony Korine is too arrogant to understand that it's much harder to tell a story coherently than it is to string together a series of meaningless "cruel" vignettes. But that's a mistake that can be put down to youth. What can't be forgiven is the habit of aestheticizing the poverty and troubles of helpless people. (Denby; 11/3/97) (1 hr. 35 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center.*

Happy Together—Cannes winner about two Hong Kong expats working on their relationship while stuck in Buenos Aires. Directed by Wong Kar-Wai. (1 hr. 37 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

★**The House of Yes**—*The House of Yes* is actually about a witty group of monsters who enjoy playing tricks on one another. In the eighties, young Marty Pascal (Josh Hamilton) returns home to his mother's house in Washington, D.C., with his innocent fiancée (Tori Spelling) in tow. It's a Tennessee Williams house, a big bad house with a Secret. Marty's dad died—was shot, perhaps—the same day that JFK was shot, and Marty's sister, who calls herself Jackie-O (Parker Posey), has become obsessed with both deaths and lives in a mad dream world in which she is Jackie, always Jackie, with a pink dress and a pillbox hat and dark hair in a bouffant turned up at the cheek. Her mother (Genevieve Bujold) makes malicious and ironic jokes, sometimes at her own expense; her younger brother (Freddie Prinze Jr.) is some sort of school dropout who puts the moves on Marty's fiancée as quickly as he can. There's something weird and sexual going on between Marty and Jackie-O, which isn't very hard to figure out, and there's a gun that is part of a repeated ritual and that goes off the way guns in plays are supposed to go off (at the end). The movie is fun precisely because the director, Mark Waters (it's his first film), embraces the gamesmanship, the posing and teasing theatricality. The nifty opening sequence—a home movie of a teenage Jackie-O showing off the mansion, footage that gets intercut with the real Jackie showing off the White House—sets the tone of sinister farce, and the actors are skillful enough to keep the macabre flights aloft. Parker Posey, looking tense as an electric wire in her Jackie rig, narrows her eyes into slits and speaks such lines as "I spend most of my days with my head in the toilet . . . throwing up pills" with as much eccentric force as a young Kate Hepburn. At first glance, Josh Hamilton does indeed look like a conventionally handsome rich boy. But when he and Parker get their brother-sister attraction going, some sort of gleam comes into Hamilton's eyes, and he is lost and naughty at the same time. Director Waters knows what he is doing. He may have adapted a play, but he has a firm grasp of film grammar. The moving camera is impressively dreamlike; the point-of-view shots are used strategically, as they would have been in a forties Hollywood movie. *The House of Yes* is a hothouse plant and only of limited interest, but it's the kind of small demonstration piece that could open up a variety of careers. (Denby; 10/27/97) (1 hr. 27 mins.; R) *Village East; Eastside Playhouse; Regency.*

I Know What You Did Last Summer—The past comes back to torment four teenagers a year after they accidentally kill someone and dispose of the body. Jennifer Love Hewitt stars in this horror film written by *Scream's* Kevin Williamson. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea; Criterion Center; Gemini; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Brooklyn Heights; Pavilion Theatre; Centre Sunnyside; Movieworld.*

The Ice Storm—In *The Ice Storm*, the normally protected reaches of New Canaan, Connecticut, are violated by a sinister snapping noise—the sound of frozen power lines falling in a shower of sparks. Where are we, at the bottom circle of Dante's Inferno, where tears turn to ice? No, only in the land of rich, suburban Wasps, where everything is a little weird. The movie is set in the early seventies and two families are falling apart. The husband and



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father (Kevin Kline) in one of these families, the Hoods, is having a tepid affair with Janey Carver, the wife and mother (Sigourney Weaver) in the other. At the same time, Hood's 14-year-old daughter, Wendy (Christina Ricci), who likes to expose herself, is fooling around with Janey's two sons (Elijah Wood and Adam Hann-Byrd). Paul Hood, Ben's 16-year-old son, is the narrator. Paul's bemused face and hapless attempts to bed a prep-school girl are, in the performance by Tobey Maguire, about the movie's liveliest elements. For a while, we hope the film will be funny. The Hoods, the Carvers, and their friends would be swingers if only they knew how. At a wife-swapping party, husbands and wives exchange partners without much excitement, the scene acutely observed and unutterably depressing. *The Ice Storm*, perceptive as it is, feels pained and embarrassed. These people are just pathetic; they behave badly, and they don't even get any fun out of it. The actors are a talented group, but they look haltered. One wants to embrace Kline's Ben Hood, but one loses patience with the character, just as one loses patience with his wife, Elena (a masklike Joan Allen), who knows that Ben is straying and expresses her anger in bouts of shoplifting. Why doesn't any of them do something? Or at least say something? Director Ang Lee's touch is very delicate, and the movie's perfection of bleakness offers a refined pleasure (of a sort). But the material doesn't quite play. If, at one end of the spectrum, *The Ice Storm* is like Mazursky without the laughs, at the other it's like Bergman without the anguished brilliance. (Denby; 10/6/97) (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Chelsea; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; Pavilion Theatre.*

★**In & Out**—In his Oscar acceptance speech, Matt Dillon casually "outs" his high-school English teacher—Mr. Brackett. A bachelor, perhaps 40, Howard Brackett (Kevin Kline) is about to be married to another teacher (Joan Cusack). When the citizens of Greenleaf, Indiana, glued to their sets, hear about his alleged homosexuality, they freeze (literally: no one moves). Brackett denies being gay, but a pack of reporters descends on the sleepy burg, led by a persistent tabloid-TV personality (Tom Selleck) who really is gay. In the idyllic countryside, the two men run into each other, and Selleck grabs Kline and kisses him on the mouth for what seems like an eternity. Bazoingas! The teacher is knocked silly, like Buster Keaton clobbered by a brick. So is he or isn't he? Kevin Kline's lightweight, I-can-do-anything style works for this cipher. Tom Selleck has finally found his way in movies, too. Joan Cusack has one of those abandoned-at-the-altar scenes that could be nothing but a cliché, but she triumphs, too. The laughs arrive in volleys, though many of them are cheaply earned. Still, there's that kiss between Selleck and Kline. People looking for boldness will seize on it. The rest of us will have to live with it in every Oscar-night collage of Hollywood's most romantic moments. (Denby; 9/22/97) (1 hr. 30 mins.; PG-13) *Village Theatre VII; Embassy 2–4; Sutton; Lincoln Square; Brooklyn Heights; Movieworld.*

In Cold Blood—The 1967 adaptation of Capote's "nonfiction novel." With Robert Blake and John Forsythe. Directed by Richard Brooks. (2 hrs. 14 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

The Jackal—Sidney Poitier is an FBI man who teams with an imprisoned IRA operative (Richard Gere) to bring in an elusive assassin (Bruce Willis). With Diane Venora. (1 hr. 23 mins.; R) *Opens Friday.*

Kiss the Girls—It's business as usual in the disgraceful *Kiss the Girls*, the kind of thriller that pretends to sympathize with women who are being mauled and dominated by men but actually exploits the sadism for everything it can get out of it. The movie was the top-grossing picture in the country for two weeks in a row. Is it any wonder that kids like Harmony Korine are running amok? (Denby; 11/2/97) (1 hr. 57 mins.; R) *First & 62nd St. Cinema; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; New Coliseum.*

The Knowledge of Healing—A modern exploration of the uses of ancient Tibetan medicine. (1 hr. 30 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

★**L.A. Confidential**—The best American movie of the year (thus far). Based on James Ellroy's 1990 novel about corruption and honor in the L.A.P.D., it's set in 1953 after the local Mafia boss has gone to prison. All of a sudden, power in the crime world is up for grabs; some of the greedier cops are trying to lay hands on it. A group of people is massacred, and as the apparent solution to the murders unravels, a larger pattern of evil reaches out to cover widely separated elements of Los Angeles society. A crumb-bum named Sid Hudgens (Danny DeVito) is the publisher of a tabloid scandal sheet; he alerts the police to trivial forms of vice and then photographs for his magazine a celebrity cop, Jack Vincennes (Kevin Spacey), making the bust. A bullheaded cop, Bud White (Russell Crowe), is a man of abnormal rage and a tool of the seemingly benevolent but actually vicious chief of detectives, Dudley Smith (James Cromwell). Ed Exley, played by Guy Pearce, is a straight-arrow cop, all ambition and calculation. Exley is the natural enemy of Bud White, but they both slowly change: Russell Crowe comes up from brutalism, and Guy Pearce down from moralism, and they meet in the middle and join forces (to our relief). Kevin Spacey's Jack recovers his soul; so does the Veronica Lake look-alike played by Kim Basinger. Basinger, soft and saddened, is very touching as a guilty hooker, a good-bad girl worthy of the high forties. The movie is filled with wonderful actors—David Strathairn, in a pencil-line mustache; Simon Baker Denny as an eager-to-please young actor-stud. This violent story truly earns its quiet, ambiguous final note of exhausted calm. (Denby; 9/29/97) (2 hrs. 17 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea; Murray Hill Cinemas; New York Twin; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square.*

A Life Less Ordinary—The very inventively told story of a janitor (Ewan McGregor) who kidnaps the boss's daughter (Cameron Diaz) and falls in love with her. Written by John Hodge; directed by Danny Boyle (both of *Trainspotting* fame). (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Criterion Center; Movieworld.*

Mad City—See Denby page 72. (1 hr. 54 mins.; PG-13) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea West; Murray Hill Cinemas; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; New Coliseum; Kingsway; Pavilion Theatre; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas.*

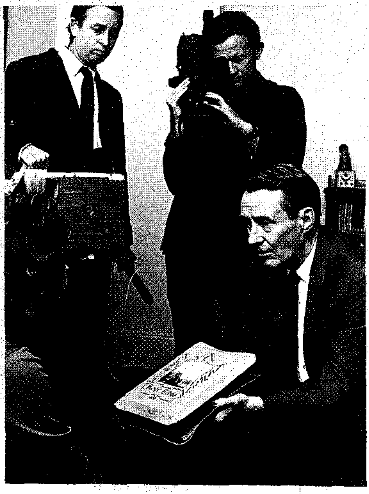
★**Mrs. Brown**—Director John Madden successfully captures the immense weight of the imperial state as it awkwardly follows in the wake of Victoria's sorrow. At his wit's end, the queen's secretary, Sir Henry Ponsonby (the baleful Geoffrey Palmer), hits on the idea of calling back into royal service Prince Albert's groom, John Brown (Billy Connolly), a Highlands Scot whom the prince had been fond of. Brown shows up and tells the queen, to the court's shocked dismay, that she

Festival

Candid Cameras

When a young psychologist named Albert Maysles made plans to visit the USSR in 1955, he decided that the trip was "a serious opportunity to do something interesting." Playing with the idea of examining life inside a Soviet mental hospital, he approached CBS and persuaded a news editor to lend him a 16-mm. camera—something, Maysles confesses, he'd never seen before. Once in Moscow, Maysles sneaked into a Romanian-embassy party and befriended a Soviet officer, who—in an un–Evil Empire–like manner—helped Maysles get his footage. CBS used ten seconds of it, hardly enough to please him: "People needed to know that the Russians were not that different from us." His first efforts, though, put Maysles on a list of emerging directors (explored in "Sixties Cinéma Vérité," a 42-film festival opening Friday at Film Forum) who were changing the way documentaries were shot. Robert Drew was their innovating godfather. A former *Life* magazine editor, Drew (now 73) re-created the documentary partly by dropping the mind-numbing narration. "My idea," Drew says, "was that we'd photograph life as it was without impinging on it." Using small crews of two or three and carrying a handheld camera and microphone, these new directors captured seminal sixties scenes, like JFK on the presidential trail in Drew's *Primary* (above); the sad life of door-to-door Bible peddlers (Albert and David Maysles's *Salesman*, bottom left); and the Rolling Stones at Altamont ("If you really want to know the demise of the sixties," says Maysles, "*Gimme Shelter*'s the film to see"). In the process, the young filmmakers unwittingly created a jerky, candid style immediately borrowed by the French for their own vérité movement. Today the technique is ubiquitous. "Our cameras shook a bit," says a bemused Drew, "because we were doing the impossible, walking and filming at the same time." Many of the docs appeared as one-hour television specials, but finding funding and network interest, notes the now-70-year-old Maysles, was always a chore: "I'd say, 'It's about the human condition,' and they'd say, 'Oh, yeah—but that's depressing.' " Maysles pauses. "The more truth you have to tell," he sighs, "the less you *can* tell."

Patricia Falvo



Photographs: top, courtesy of Drew Associates; bottom, courtesy of Film Forum/Photofest looks awful. The queen suffers Brown's impertinence, and they become friends, at which point the London scandal sheets begin referring to her as "Mrs. Brown." *Mrs. Brown*, with its misty highlands and severely luxurious royal rooms, is very handsome, but the dim light of rectitude rules the court, and I was highly grateful for the presence of Antony Sher, who plays Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli. Sher's Disraeli is the only one shrewd enough to know that Brown, Victoria's half-mad imaginary lover, is the man to bring Victoria back into the public's eye, which is finally the only place she belongs. (Denby; 7/28/97) (1 hr. 43 mins.; PG) *62nd and Broadway.*

Nick and Jane—A financial analyst loses her boyfriend to another woman and uses an extremely handsome cabbie as a prop to make her former beau jealous. Starring Dana Wheeler-Nicholson, James McCaffrey, Gedde Watanabe, and David Johansen. (1 hr. 36 mins.; R) *Opens Friday at Village East and Sutton.*

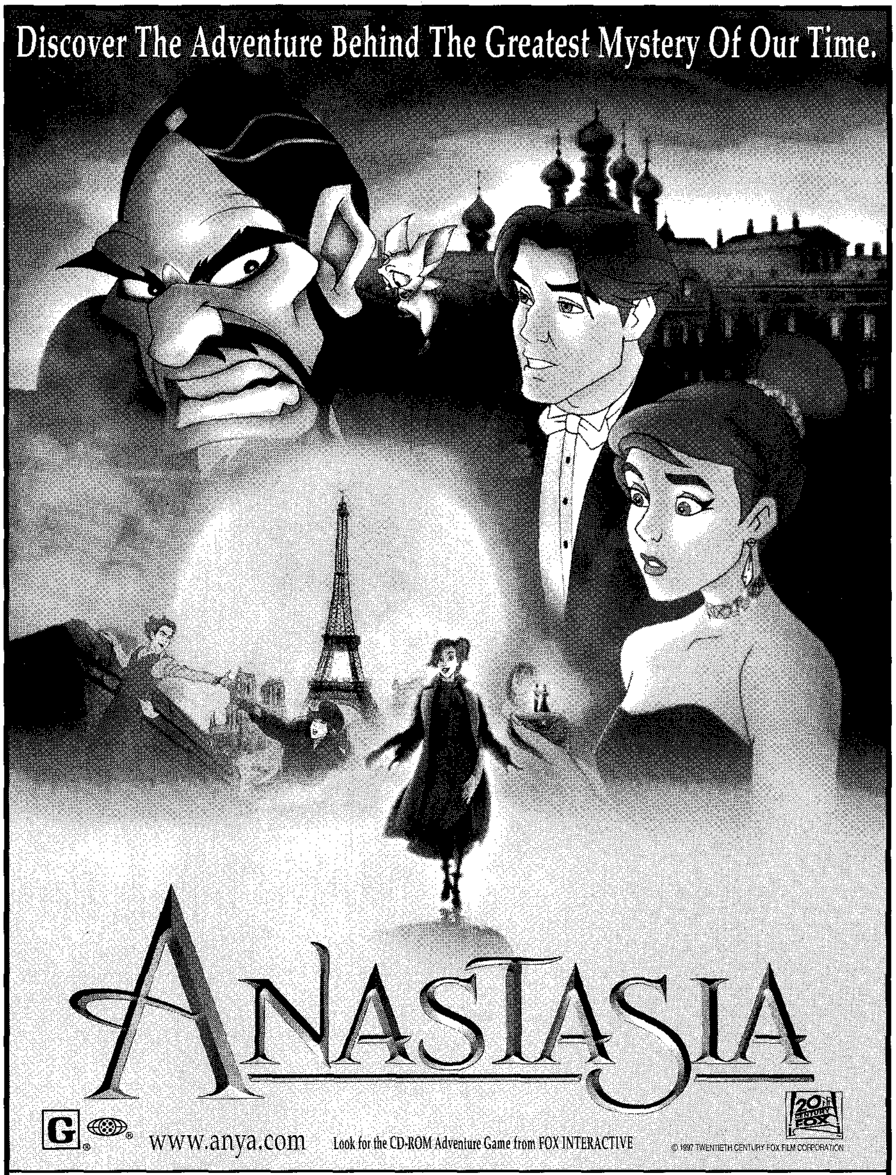
One Night Stand—A hard-edged Wesley Snipes and a messy-tressed Nastassja Kinski spend one long night together in a hotel and coincidentally meet again later, spouses in tow. Directed by Mike Figgis. With Kyle MacLachlan and Robert Downey Jr. (1 hr. 43 mins.; R) *Opens Friday.*

Playing God—David Duchovny is a surgeon who is stripped of his license and becomes the caretaker to a group of dangerous criminals. With Timothy Hutton and Angelina Jolie. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Crown Gotham.*

Red Corner—Richard Gere stars as an entertainment lawyer imprisoned in China for a murder he didn't commit. With Bai Ling. (1 hr. 59 mins.; R) *Art Greenwich Twin; 19th Street East; 34th Street Showplace; Ziegfeld; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; New Coliseum; Olympia Theatre; Kingsway; Pavilion Theatre; Main Street Cinemas; Movieworld.*

Seven Years in Tibet—*Seven Years in Tibet* appears to be an epic made for the people of Southern California. A selfish bastard from Austria named Heinrich Harrer (Brad Pitt) climbs enormous Himalayan peaks in 1939, gets thrown into a British prison camp at the start of the war, escapes, links up with another escapee, fellow Austrian climber Peter Aufschnaiter (David Thewlis), and penetrates the mysterious holy city of Lhasa, Tibet, where he attains humility and peace and even selflessness, largely through friendship with the teenage Dalai Lama. With someone as bland as Pitt at the center of the movie, the mountain peaks are less a visual metaphor of striving and spiritual ambition than an inert picture-postcard background. In the beginning, Pitt doesn't look arrogant; he looks merely puppyish and snarly, and when he reforms, he just seems becalmed, even bored. (Brad Pitt may be an actor for teenage girls and no one else.) Heinrich Harrer, it turns out, was no innocent Austrian mountain climber but a Nazi and an active member of the S.S. The German magazine *Stern* outed him about five months ago, when the movie was almost done. (A few hastily written voice-over lines spoken by Pitt allude to the party membership.) Perhaps it's characteristic of the empty-headed piety behind movies like this that the people involved in it did years of preparation and managed not to discover the single most important fact about their hero. (Denby; 10/13/97) (2 hrs.. 11 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; Murray Hill Cinemas; Criterion Center; Gemini; Lincoln Square.*

★**Shall We Dance?**—Hollywood's virtual abandonment of dancing has been one of the industry's greatest follies of the past twenty years. To our chagrin, it is now up to other countries to put dance into the movies. The Japanese, perhaps, are not ready to make a full-scale dance musical, but in the gravely charming *Shall We Dance?* they have made a shy and tender pass at one. Ballroom dancing, we learn, is a secret passion in Japan. The hero, Shohei Suhiyama (Koji Yakusho), a fortyish accountant, with a wife and daughter tucked away in a suburban house, sneaks off to a dancing school as if indulging a hidden vice. There he meets the other guilty men, all of whom, overcoming hideous shyness, stumble through beginner's agonies in the waltz, tango, and rumba. The teachers, accomplished woman dancers, do what they can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with this recalcitrant material, and Shohei falls in love with one of them, Mai (Tamiyo Kusakari), a tall, lovely girl who has her own guilty secret. At times, the movie (written and directed by Masayuki Suo) comes close to embarrassment: For us, all this exquisite Japanese tact seems so nuttily beside the point. Yet it's hard not to be touched when the men speak of their pleasure in movement, and when Shohei, though not a natural, dons a beautiful tux and achieves a proud competency in a ballroom competition. (Denby; 7/28/97) (1 hr. 57 mins.; PG) *Quad Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

She's So Lovely—Sean Penn and Robin Wright Penn play heavy-drinking lovebirds in this John Cassavetes story directed by his son, Nick. With John Travolta. (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) *Worldwide Cinemas; Plaza Twin.*

Sick—The moving life chronicle of artist, poet, and supermasochist Bob Flanagan. (1 hr. 29 mins.; NR) *Angelika Film Center.*

Soul Food—An extended family learns to stay together without the help of its matriarch. With Vanessa Williams, Nia Long, and Vivica Fox. (1 hr. 14 mins.; R) *National Theatre; Plaza Twin.*

Starship Troopers—See Denby page 72. (2 hrs. 9 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 34th Street Showplace; Chelsea; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; Metro Cinema; Pavilion Theatre; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza .*

Switchback—Dennis Quaid is an FBI agent tracking a serial killer across the west. With Danny Glover and Jared Leto. Directed by Jeb Stuart. (2 hrs.; R) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea; 59th Street East; Embassy 1; 86th Street East; 84th Street; Metro Cinema; Nova.*

The Tango Lesson—Sally Potter writes, directs, and stars in this way-cerebral story of tango dancing and one woman's obsession with it. (1 hr. 41 mins.; PG) *Opens Friday.*

Telling Lies in America—Kevin Bacon is a crooked Cleveland disk jockey who takes an unpopular Hungarian high-schooler (Brad Renfro) under his wing and shows him the good life. Written by Joe Eszterhas. With Maximilian Schell and Calista Flockhart. (1 hr. 41 mins.; PG-13) *Screening Room; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

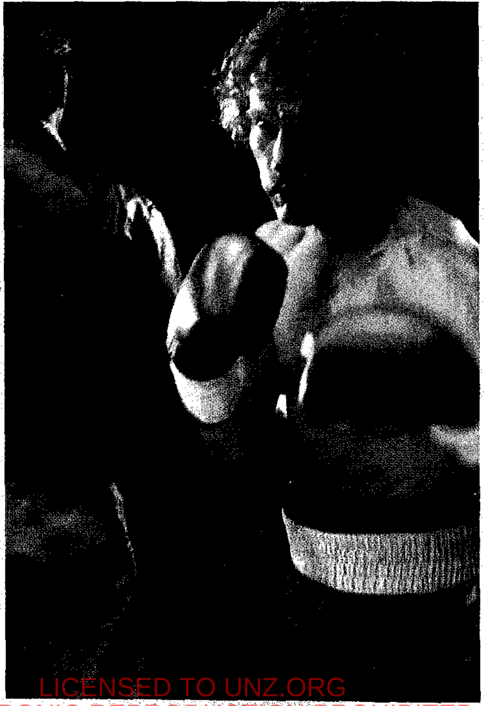
★**Washington Square**—In *Washington Square*, set in upper-class New York in the 1850s, a plain, awkward girl who happens to be an heiress, Catherine Sloper (Jennifer Jason Leigh), meets a handsome young man, Morris Townsend (Ben Chaplin), at an elaborate garden party. No man of comparable beauty, or any beauty at all, has paid her much attention in her life, which has been led entirely under the gaze of her father, Dr. Sloper (Albert Finney), a widower of sardonic speech and dictatorial temperament. Morris is not only good-looking but also charming, ardent, and, as far as Catherine can tell, entirely taken with her. Is he serious? A mere opportunist? Catherine's father is sure that he is after her fortune. Agnieszka Holland, the Polish-born director of *Europa, Europa* and *Olivier, Olivier,* gives every emotion its full stop. If the results aren't in line with James's tone—one of suavity yielding to outbursts of candor—the movie often works on its own terms as emotional drama. At first Jennifer Jason Leigh is too rabbity. Her Catherine seems not merely shy and awkward but half insane. Jason Leigh is about half the size of Ben Chaplin, whose Morris Townsend nearly devours Catherine, and she's ready to be devoured. Albert Finney, however, is something of a brute. He seems to have wandered in from another set, where Dickens was being adapted. But Chaplin and Jason Leigh keep the movie on track. Henry James gave Catherine dignity in withdrawal; Holland, in a series of final radiant close-ups, makes her a force. It's a feminist reading of the text but not a vulgarization of it. (Denby; 10/13/97) (1 hr. 57 mins.; PG) *Angelika Film Center; Paris Theatre.*

The Wind in the Willows—A live-action version of the classic English children's' story. With John Cleese and Terry Jones, who also directs. (1 hr. 27 mins.; PG) .

★**The Wings of the Dove**—The movie differs from Henry James's novel in a hundred particulars, but the great point is that it works on its own terms, which is all one can ask. At the center, there are two young people who love each other but need money. Kate Croy (Helena Bonham Carter), clever, beautiful, and distinguished, lives in London with her wealthy aunt (Charlotte Rampling), who is determined to marry her off to a rich man and who does what she can to break up Kate's relationship with the charming but penurious young journalist Merton Densher (Linus Roache). We are drawn to Bonham Carter's intelligence, even though her Kate is not brave enough to live with Densher in poverty. Kate plays for the largest stakes; she wants her handsome young man and she wants to be rich, too. By degrees, and without his quite understanding it, Densher gets pulled into a conspiracy that Kate engineers. For there is another young person in their social circle, the fabulously wealthy American heiress Millie Theale (Alison Elliott), who is sweet, generous, and wasting away from some nameless disease. Millie needs a lover; she needs to live. Kate, who genuinely likes her, wants Millie to be happy and to know love—with Densher, who would then inherit the money, after Millie's death, that would allow Kate to marry him. Kate's motives are mixed, both selfless and selfish, benevolent and sinister, and she corrupts Densher with her provocative ambivalence. Because he's such a splendid fellow, Densher's puzzlement as Kate pushes him into Millie's arms is painful; his anger and sexual aggression as he realizes how he is being used become the dramatic high point of the movie. The complicating factor—Henry James always has a complicating factor—is that Densher falls for Millie; or rather, he falls for her desire to experience everything she can before dying. The filmmakers have aggressively bumped the period ahead from 1902 to 1910; the characters take the subway, smoke cigarettes furiously and attend a gallery exhibit of Klimt's decadent nudes. We get the point: Kate Croy and Merton Densher are modern personalities, rebels against the constrictions of their time. Rebellion is certainly not something that Henry James had in mind, but it's a minor vulgarization. (Denby; 11/10/97) (1 hr. 43 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Beekman; Lincoln Square.*

Opening
The Punching Bag

In 'The Mouse,' John Savage (below) is a mediocre boxer who carves himself a shady but lucrative niche as a "professional opponent," eluding officials by changing names and facial hair. The pugilistic comedy is based on the life story of the sport's greatest loser, Bruce "the Mouse" Strauss—who once changed weight classes by fighting with fifteen pounds of lead in his pants. Opens Friday.



Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Angelika Film Center—18 W. Houston St. (995-2000) *The Full Monty; Gummo; The Ice Storm; A Life Less Ordinary; Sick; Washington Square; The Wings of the Dove.*

Art Greenwich Twin—Greenwich Ave. at 12th St. (505-CINE#616) *Red Corner.*

Cinema Village 12th St—22 E. 12th St. (924-3363) *Happy Together.*

Film Forum—209 W. Houston St. (727-8110) *Fast, Cheap & Out of Control; In Cold Blood; The Knowledge of Healing.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Quad Cinema—34 W.13th St. (255-8800) *Critical Care; Happy Together; Shall We Dance?.*

Screening Room—54 Varick St. (below Canal) (334-2100) *Telling Lies in America.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Village East—189 Second Ave., at 12th St. (529-6799) *Boogie Nights; Cold Around the Heart; Devil's Advocate; Gattaca; The House of Yes.*

Village Theatre VII—66 Third Ave., at 11th St. (982-0400) *Bean; Fairytale—A True Story; I Know What You Did Last Summer; In & Out; L.A. Confidential; Mad City; Seven Years in Tibet; Starship Troopers; Switchback.*

Waverly—323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (505-CINE#603) *Eve's Bayou.*

14th-41st Streets

19th Street East—890 Broadway, at 19th St. (260-8000) *Boogie Nights; Devil's Advocate; Eve's Bayou; The Full Monty; Gattaca; Red Corner.*

34th Street Showplace—238 E. 34th St. (532-5544) *Devil's Advocate; Red Corner; Starship Troopers.*

Chelsea—260 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#597) *Bean; Fairytale—A True Story; I Know What You Did Last Summer; The Ice Storm; L.A. Confidential; Starship Troopers; Switchback.*

Chelsea West—333 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#614) *Critical Care; Mad City.*

Murray Hill Cinemas—160 E. 34th St. (689-6548) *Boogie Nights; L.A. Confidential; Mad City; Seven Years in Tibet.*

42nd-60th Streets

59th Street East—239 E. 59th St. (505-CINE#615) *Switchback.*

Astor Plaza—44th St. bet. Broadway and Eighth Ave. (869-8340) *Devil's Advocate.*

Cinema I, II, Third Ave.—1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (753-6022) *Boogie Nights; The Ice Storm.*

Coronet—993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (505-CINE#608) *Critical Care; The Full Monty.*

Criterion Center—1514 Broadway, bet. 44th and 45th Sts. (354-0900) *Wind in the Willows; The Edge; Gang Related; I Know What You Did Last Summer; A Life Less Ordinary; Most Wanted; Seven Years in Tibet; Wishmaster.*

Crown Gotham—969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (759-2262) *Playing God.*

Eastside Playhouse—919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (755-3020) *The House of Yes.*

Embassy 1—1560 Broadway, bet. 46th and 47th Sts. (302-0494) *Switchback.*

Embassy 2–4—701 Seventh Ave., bet. 47th and 48th Sts. (730-7262) *In Search of the Dream; The Game; Grizzly Mountain; In & Out.*

Guild 50th Street—33 W. 50th St. (757-2406) *Fairytale—A True Story.*

National Theatre—1500 Broadway, bet. 43rd and 44th Sts. (505-CINE#589) *The Peacemaker; Soul Food.*

Paris Theatre—4 W. 58th St. (688-3800) *Washington Square.*

State—1540 Broadway (391-2900) *Boogie Nights; Eve's Bayou; Gattaca; Kiss the Girls; L.A. Confidential.*

Sutton—205 E. 57th St. (759-1411) *The Deli; Fairytale—A True Story; In & Out.*

Worldwide Cinemas—340 W. 50th St. (505-CINE#610) *Conspiracy Theory; Cop Land; Event Horizon; The Matchmaker; Picture Perfect; She's So Lovely.*

Ziegfeld—141 W. 54th St. (505-CINE#602) *Red Corner.*

61st Street and Above, East Side

72nd St. East—1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (879-1313) *Bean.*

86th Street—125 E. 86th St. (505-CINE#604) *Bean; Eve's Bayou.*

86th Street East—210 E. 86th St. (249-1144) *Gattaca; Switchback.*

Beekman—1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (505-CINE#606) *The Wings of the Dove.*

First & 62nd St. Cinema—400 E. 62nd St. (505-CINE#957) *Eve's Bayou; Gattaca; Kiss the Girls; Mad City; Red Corner.*

Gemini—1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (832-1670) *Wind in the Willows; I Know What You Did Last Summer; Seven Years in Tibet.*

New York Twin—1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (744-7339) *Devil's Advocate; L.A. Confidential.*

Orpheum 7—1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (876-2400) *Boogie Nights; Devil's Advocate; I Know What You Did Last Summer; Kiss the Girls; L.A. Confidential; Mad City; Red Corner; Starship Troopers.*

UA East—1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (249-5100) *Fairytale—A True Story.*

61st Street and Above, West Side

62nd and Broadway—1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (505-CINE#864) *Mrs. Brown.*

84th Street—2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (877-3600) *Critical Care; Devil's Advocate; Kiss the Girls; Starship Troopers; Switchback.*

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas—30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (757-2280) *Beaumarchais: The Scoundrel; The Full Monty; The Ice Storm; Shall We Dance?; Telling Lies in America.*

Lincoln Square—1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (336-5000) *Bean; Boogie Nights; Eve's Bayou; Fairytale—A True Story; Gattaca; I Know What You Did Last Summer; In & Out; L.A. Confidential; Mad City; Red Corner; Seven Years in Tibet; The Wings of the Dove.* IMAX: *Across the Sea of Time; L5–First City in Space; Mission to Mir; Four Million House Guests; Mad City; Thrill Ride.*

etro Cinema—2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (505-CINE#609) *Starship Troopers; Switchback.*

ew Coliseum—701 W. 181st St. (740-1545) *In Search of the Dream; Kiss the Girls; Mad City; Red Corner.*

ova—3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (862-5728) *In Search of the Dream; Devil's Advocate; Switchback.*

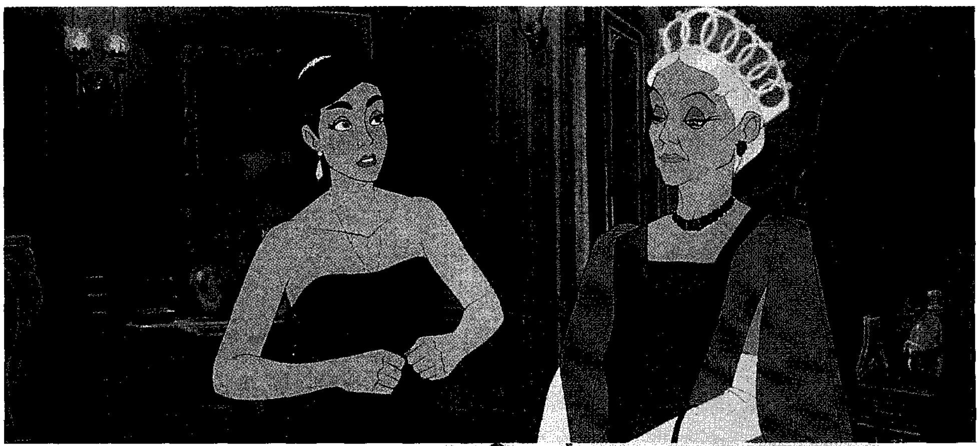
lympia Theatre—2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (505-CINE#613) *Devil's Advocate; Red Corner.*

egency—1987 Broadway, bet. 67th and 68th Sts. (505-CINE#585) *The House of Yes.*

Bronx

Area Code 718

ay Plaza—2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (320-3020) *In Search of the Dream; Dance Hall Queen; Devil's Advocate; Eve's Bayou; Fairytale—A True Story; I Know What You Did Last Summer; Kiss the Girls; Mad City; Nueba Yol 3; Red Corner; Soul Food; Starship Troopers; Switchback.*



hotograph courtesy of Twentieth Century Fox.

Opening
Little Girl Lost

***Anastasia*, Twentieth Century Fox's maiden venture into the world of animated motion pictures, features Meg Ryan as the voice of the homeless Russian princess and Angela Lansbury emoting as Grandma, the Dowager Empress Marie. Opens Friday.**

Concourse Plaza—214 E. 161th St. (588-8800) *In Search of the Dream; Devil's Advocate; Eve's Bayou; Fairytale—A True Story; Gattaca; I Know What You Did Last Summer; Nueba Yol 3; Red Corner; Starship Troopers; Switchback.*

Whitestone—2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (409-9037) *In Search of the Dream; Bean; Devil's Advocate; Eve's Bayou; Fairytale—A True Story; I Know What You Did Last Summer; Mad City; Nueba Yol 3; Red Corner; Starship Troopers; Switchback.*

Brooklyn

Area Code 718

Alpine—6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (777-FILM#580) *Bean; Boogie Nights; Devil's Advocate; Fairytale—A True Story; Gattaca; Kiss the Girls; Red Corner.*

Canarsie—9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (251-0700) *Eve's Bayou; Red Corner; Starship Troopers.*

Cobble Hill—265 Court St. (596-9113) *Fairytale—A True Story; The Ice Storm; L.A. Confidential; Mad City; Red Corner; Starship Troopers.*

Fortway—6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (777-FILM#578) *In Search of the Dream; I Know What You Did Last Summer; Mad City; Starship Troopers; Switchback.*

Kenmore—Church Ave. nr. Flatbush Ave. (777-FILM#576) *Eve's Bayou; I Know What You Did Last Summer; Starship Troopers; Switchback.*

Kent Triplex—Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (338-3371) *Mad City; Red Corner; Switchback.*

Kings Plaza—5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (777-FILM#579) *Eve's Bayou; Fairytale—A True Story; I Know What You Did Last Summer; Soul Food; Starship Troopers; Switchback.*

Kingsway—946 Kings Hwy. at Coney Island Ave. (777-FILM#577) *Bean; Boogie Nights; Devil's Advocate; Mad City; Red Corner.*

Marboro—6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (232-4000) *Devil's Advocate; Kiss the Girls; Red Corner; Switchback.*

Pavilion Theatre—188 Prospect Park West, Brooklyn (369-0838) *Bean; Boogie Nights; Devil's Advocate; Fairytale—A True Story; I Know What You Did Last Summer; The Ice Storm; Mad City; Red Corner; Starship Troopers.*

Plaza Twin—314 Flatbush Ave., nr. Eighth Ave. (636-0170) *Devil's Advocate; She's So Lovely; Soul Food.*

Ridgewood—55–27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (821-5993) *In Search of the Dream; Eve's Bayou; Mad City; Starship Troopers.*

The Movies at Sheepshead Bay—3907 Shore Pkwy, off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (615-1700) *Boogie Nights; Devil's Advocate; Gattaca; I Know What You Did Last Summer; In & Out; Kiss the Girls; A Life Less Ordinary; Red Corner; Seven Years in Tibet; Soul Food.*

Queens

Area Code 718

Astoria—28–60 Steinway St. (726-1279) *Devil's Advocate; I Know What You Did Last Summer; Kiss the Girls; A Life Less Ordinary; The Peacemaker; Red Corner; Switchback.*

Bay Terrace—211–01 26th Ave. and Bell Blvd., Bayside (428-4040) *Bean; Devil's Advocate; Fairytale—A True Story; Kiss the Girls; L.A. Confidential; Mad City; Red Corner.*

Centre Sunnyside—42–17 Queens Blvd. (361-6869) *I Know What You Did Last Summer; Mad City; Starship Troopers.*

Cinema City—183–15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (777-FILM#592) *Eve's Bayou; I Know What You Did Last Summer; Starship Troopers; Switchback.*

Cinemart—106–03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (261-2244) *Fairytale—A True Story; Gattaca; I Know What You Did Last Summer; Kiss the Girls; Red Corner; Shall We Dance?; Switchback.*

Continental—70–20 Austin St., Forest Hills (544-1020) *L.A. Confidential; The Peacemaker; Seven Years in Tibet; Soul Food.*

Crossbay—94–11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (848-1738) *I Know What You Did Last Summer; Soul Food; Switchback.*

Crossbay II—92–10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (641-5330) *Boogie Nights; Devil's Advocate; Fairytale—A True Story; In & Out; Kiss the Girls; A Life Less Ordinary; Nueba Yol 3; The Peacemaker; Red Corner.*

Elmwood—57–02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (429-4770) *Eve's Bayou; I Know What You Did Last Summer; Red Corner; Switchback.*

Forest Hills—107–16 Continental Ave., at Queens Blvd. (261-7866) *Devil's Advocate; A Life Less Ordinary.*

Fresh Meadows—Eastbound Service Road, at 190th St. (777-FILM#619) *Bean; Boogie Nights; Devil's Advocate; Fairytale—A True Story; In & Out; Kiss the Girls; Mad City; Red Corner; Seven Years in Tibet.*

Jackson Triplex—82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (478-6777) *In Search of the Dream; I Know What You Did Last Summer; Switchback.*

Main Street Cinemas—72–66 Main St. (263-4828) *Devil's Advocate; Leave It to Beaver; Mad City; Red Corner; Starship Troopers; The Rocky Horror Picture Show.*

Midway—108–22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (261-8572) *Closed for Renovations.*

Movieworld—242–02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (423-7200) *Boogie Nights; Devil's Advocate; Fairytale—A True Story; I Know What You Did Last Summer; In & Out; A Life Less Ordinary; The Peacemaker; Red Corner; Rocketman.*

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One-Shot Kit Kat Encore

Twenty-five years after Bob Fosse's 'Cabaret' swept the Academy Awards (it won eight), Liza Minnelli and Joel Grey are back together, this time for a special screening to benefit Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, and for a Kit Kat Klub–themed party that, one expects, can't help but be more subdued than the film's raging Berlin original. On November 17. See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for more info.

North Shore Towers—27–10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (229-7702) *Kiss the Girls; L.A. Confidential; Shall We Dance?.*

Plaza—103–14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (639-0012) *In Search of the Dream; Starship Troopers.*

Quartet—160–06 Northern Blvd., at 160th St., Flushing (359-6777) *I Know What You Did Last Summer; A Life Less Ordinary; Red Corner; Switchback.*

Trylon—98–81 Queens Blvd., at 66th Ave., Rego Park (459-8944) *Boogie Nights.*

Staten Island

Area Code 718

Atrium—680 Arthur Kill Road, nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (317-8300) *Bean; Devil's Advocate; Fairytale—A True Story; The Full Monty; I Know What You Did Last Summer; L.A. Confidential; Mad City; Red Corner; Starship Troopers; Switchback.*

Hylan Plaza—107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (351-0805) *Kiss the Girls; Fairytale—A True Story; Red Corner; I Know What You Did Last Summer; Devil's Advocate.*

The Movies at Staten Island—141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (983-9600) *Devil's Advocate; A Life Less Ordinary; Rocketman; In & Out; Grizzly Mountain; Seven Years in Tibet; Switchback; Red Corner; Fairytale—A True Story; Gattaca; Kiss the Girls; I Know What You Did Last Summer; Boogie Nights.*

Museums, Societies, Etc.

American Museum of Natural History—Through 11/12: "The Margaret Mead Film & Video Festival." Central Park West at 79th St. (769-5305); $6.

American Museum of the Moving Image—"Street Scenes: Jewish Life in New York." 11/15: *Arguing the World* (1997) and *The Chosen* (1981). 11/16: *New York Ghetto Fish Market 1903* (1993–97) and *A Life Apart: Hasidism in America* (1997). 36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens (718-784-0077); $8, $4 ages 5–18.

Anthology Film Archives—"SeOUL NYmAX 97." 11/11-11/15: *301/302* (1996). 11/15: *Why the Bodhi Dharma Has Left for the East* (1989). 11/14: *Push! Push!* (1997). 11/11 and 11/15: *Farewell My Darling* (1996). 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110); $7.

Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS—11/17: *Cabaret* (1972). Call 840-0770; tickets start at $25.

Different Light—11/16: *Desperately Seeking Susan* (1985). 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850); free.

Donnell Media Center—"Romanov Russia." 11/12: *Uncle Vanya* (1972). "Simply Blues." 11/13: *Chicago Blues* (1970) and *Big City Blues* (1986). 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619); free.

Film Forum—"Sixties Vérité." 11/14–11/16: *Showman* (1962), *A Visit With Truman Capote* (1965), and *Meet Marlon Brando* (1965). 11/17: *The Murder of Fred Hampton* (1971), *Chiefs* (1968), and *And This Is Free* (1960). "Columbia Before the Code." 11/11: *Love Affair* (1932) and *The Menace* (1932). 11/18: *So This Is Africa* (1933) and *The Woman I Stole* (1933). 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110); $8.

Film Society of Lincoln Center—(The Walter Reade Theater)—"The Cinema of Andrei Konchalovsky." 11/11: *Siberiade* (1979). 11/12 and 11/14: *Romance of the Lovers* (1974) and *Runaway Train* (1985). 11/16–11/18: *Maria's Lovers* (1984) and *Shy People* (1987). "Movies for Kids." 11/15–11/16: *Never Give a Sucker an Even Break* (1941). Call 875-5601 for info. 65 W. 65th St., plaza level (875-5600); $8.50.

French Institute—"From Paris to Hollywood: Originals vs. Remakes." 11/18: *La Femme Nikita* (1990) and *The Point of No Return* (1993). Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160); $7, $10 double feature.

Guggenheim Museum—"Lunchtime Films on Rauschenberg." 11/15: *The Art of Performance* and *Merce Cunningham.* 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (423-3587).

Japan Society—"Japanese Theatre on Film." 11/11: *Throne of Blood* (1957). 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015); $7.50.

Museum of Jewish Heritage—"Film and Discussion Series." 11/12: *I Love You, Rosa* (1972); discussion with Dr. Jane Gerber. Florence Gould Hall, French Institute, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160); free.

Museum of Modern Art—"Recent Films From Germany." 11/11 and 11/15: *Exil Shanghai* (1996). 11/11 and 11/13: *Hotel Morgana* (1997). 11/13: *Obsession* (1997). 11/14 and 11/16: *Rokok* (1997). "New Documentaries." 11/13–11/14: *A Sheepherder's Coming Home* (1997). "From the Archives: American Films, 1926." 11/14 and 11/16: *Irene.* 11/15: *What Price Glory?* 11/15 and 11/17: *Flesh and the Devil* and *Moana.* "Nota Bene." 11/18: *Tempest* (1982) and *Girl With Hyacinths* (1950). "Who the Devil Made It." 11/14: *Bonjour Tristesse* (1958). 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9400); free with $9.50 admission.

Museum of Television & Radio—"TV Movies." Month of November: *That Certain Summer* (1972). 25 W 52nd St. (621-6600); $6.

New Italian Cinema Events Film Festival—Through 11/14: Contemporary Italian cinema. For information, call 803-5437; at the Quad Cinema, 34 W 13th St. (255-8800).

New York Lesbian & Gay Film Festival—Through 11/1 at Cinema Village, PlanetOut, and The Knitting Factory. For info and complete schedule, call 571-4242; $8.

Screening Room—Midnight showing: *Swingers* (1996 and *Pulp Fiction* (1995). Sunday brunch: *Casablanca* (1942) and *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961). 54 Varic St., below Canal St. (334-2100); $8 ($5 for Sunda brunch patrons).

Symphony Space—"Truffaut: The Man Who Love Film." 11/18: *Small Change* (1976) and *Zéro fo Conduct* (1933). 2537 Broadway, at 96th St. (864-5400); $8, $5 members.

YWCA Cine-Club—"A Celebration of Japanese Cinema." 11/15–11/16: *Boy* (1969). 610 Lexingto Ave., at 53rd St. (735-9717); $5 members, $6 non-members.

Photograph courtesy of Lorimar Telepicture

art

Richard Pousette-Dart...Birgit Jürgenssen

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

John Bowman—New paintings on wood panels that depict figures in specific settings, such as Central Park, or in abstracted space; through 12/13. Winston Wächter, 111 E. 65th St. (327-2526).

Mark Catesby—Watercolors of the flora and fauna seen by the British naturalist-artist on his journeys to Carolina, Florida, and the Bahamas between 1722 and 1726; through 1/23. New York School of Interior Design, 170 E. 70th St. (472-1500), Mon.–Sat. 10–5.

Franz Kline—A survey of the Abstract Expressionist's works, from his earliest sketchbooks to his final painting; through 1/17. Stone, 113 E. 90th St. (988-6870).

Eugène Leroy—New paintings on the theme of the four seasons by this French artist who was born in 1910 and has spent most of his life in northern France; through 11/29. Werner, 21 E. 67th St. (988-1623).

Sol LeWitt—Early working drawings, finished drawings, photographs, and structures ranging from *Objectivity,* a painted canvas wall structure from 1962, to a plotted and cut photograph of an aerial view of Manhattan from 1979, as well as a four-part, serial wall drawing from 1969 executed in color for the first time; through 1/3. Ubu, 16 E. 78th St. (794-4444).

Richard Pousette-Dart—A selection of the artist's paintings exploring variations of the circle, a form that interested him formally and iconographically throughout his career; through 11/29. Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (794-0550).

John Singer Sargent—The first survey of the artist's landscapes and figure scenes produced during his travels in Europe between 1900 and 1914, including works on loan from museums and the Sargent family; through 12/13. Adelson, 25 E. 77th St. (439-6800), Mon.–Fri. 9:30–5:30, Sat. 10–5.

Miklos Suba—A survey of paintings, watercolors, and drawings by the Hungarian-born Precisionist (1880–1944); through 12/13. Graham, 1014 Madison Ave. (535-5767).

57th Street Area

Milton Avery—A selection of paintings by the American artist (1885–1964), who is known for his remarkable color sense and whose reductive landscapes bridged the gap between realism and abstraction; through 12/6. DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave. (247-2111).

Beattie & Davidson—Collaborative narrative paintings that depict mutant characters in hexagonal grids, subverting the geometry they occupy; through 11/29. Helman, 20 W. 57th St. (245-2888).

ake Berthot—New paintings and drawings of landscapes that draw on the artist's earlier abstract works; through 12/20. McKee, 745 Fifth Ave. (688-5951).

Rudy Burckhardt/Joe Brainard—Recent paintings of nature scenes/Small collages. Through 11/29. De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave. (262-5050).

Ground Rules:

Galleries are generally open Mon. through Fri. from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

Burgoyne Diller—Sculptures, wall reliefs, and drawings for three-dimensional works spanning 1930 to 1965; 11/13–1/17. Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St. (247-0082).

William Glackens/Karen Tompkins—Landscape paintings made during the twenties and thirties when the American artist (1870–1938) was living in France/Paintings and mixed-media works that explore the transformative properties of nature. Through 12/6. Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave. (307-5730).

Julie Heffernan—Paintings of women in scenes humorously derived from art history; 11/12–12/17. Littlejohn Contemporary, 41 E. 57th St. (980-2323).

Marina Karella—Paintings that deconstruct photographic images; through 12/6. McGrath, 20 W. 57th St. (956-3366).

Barbara Kruger—An exhibition of the artist's recent large-scale sculptural works that celebrate figures from modern history and whose resemblance to classical carved marble statuary is at odds with their social and political commentary, held in conjunction with a show of her sound, video, and slide projections at Jeffrey Deitch (see solo shows, SoHo and TriBeCa); through 12/20. Boone, 745 Fifth Ave. (752-2929).

Gabriel Laderman—Recent figurative paintings on the subject of death and dying; through 12/3. Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St. (664-0907).

Sheridan Lord—A survey of the late artist's paintings of landscapes of Long Island's South Fork and of still lifes; through 11/25. Peter Findlay, 41 E. 57th St. (644-4433).

Carlo Maria Mariani—New figurative paintings that depict contemporary scenes through classical imagery; through 11/29. Associated American Artists, 20 W. 57th St. (399-5510).

Ana Mendieta—Early photographs and video segments that point to the artist's later direction, among them a series titled "Facial Hair Transformations," made in 1972 when Mendieta was a student at the University of Iowa and documenting the exchange of facial hair with a male student, and a group of self-portraits, "Facial Cosmetic Variations," in which she disguised and altered her appearance using wigs, cosmetics, and prosthetic devices; through 12/20. Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (315-0470).

Piet Mondrian/Ad Reinhardt—One of a series of exhibitions presented by this gallery that illuminate the relationship between artistic sensibilities, this time pairing the paintings of the Dutch abstractionist Piet Mondrian and the American abstractionist Ad Reinhardt; through 12/13. PaceWildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. (421-3292).

Man Ray—A survey focusing on the artist's unique contributions to Surrealism, including paintings, drawings, photographs, and objects, many of which have not been exhibited since they were made in the thirties and forties; through 12/20. Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (752-0124).

Larry Rivers/Arnaldo Pomodoro—New paintings, many of which continue the artist's exploration of James Audubon and his *Birds of America* as a theme, including portraits of Audubon, single-bird studies, and images of female fashion models and birds/Small sculptures and works on paper. Through 11/29. Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (541-4900).

Pat Steir—New abstract paintings; through 11/29. Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (980-5454).

May Stevens—Paintings from the artist's "Big Daddy" series that were executed during the Vietnam War and whose unpleasant male protagonist, Big Daddy, suggests a send-up of his female Pop Art counterparts; through 11/29. Ryan, 24 W. 57th St. (397-0669).

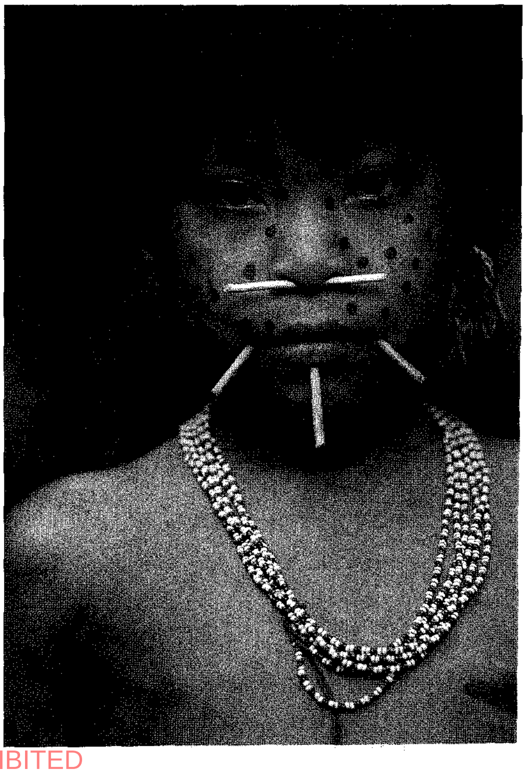
Myron Stout—Five black-and-white paintings that the artist considered unfinished, from a group of thirteen paintings that he began in the summer of 1954; through 11/29. Washburn, 20 W. 57th St. (397-6780).

Boris Zaborov—Paintings and drawings that depict haunting portraits of children and families, and

Photography

Lives of the Rain Forest

The future of the Yanomamo Indians of the Amazonian rain forest is anything but certain, which lends Valdir Cruz's eloquent black-and-white photographs of them an undeniable poignancy. But unlike Edward Curtis's staged, sentimentalized portraits of Native Americans, Cruz's images reveal both his interaction with his subjects and their remarkable generosity toward a stranger. At Throckmorton Fine Art, 153 East 61st Street; through January 10.



hotograph by Valdir Cruz, courtesy of Throckmorton Fine Art.

bronze sculptures of books; through 12/6. O'Hara, 41 E. 57th St. (355-3330).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Marina Abramovic—An installation titled *Spirit House* that is an emotive allegory comprising five video projections; through 12/6. Kelly, 43 Mercer St. (343-2405).

Walter Anderson/Charles Burchfield—An exhibit pairing the watercolors of these two American artists, both of whom replicated the patterning in nature and achieved a balance of abstraction and objective imagery. Through 1/3. Ross, 568 Broadway (343-2161).

Donald Baechler—New paintings that depict awkwardly rendered heads and faces, and a large white plaster-cast bust of the artist's father, 11/12–12/13, at Kasmin, 74 Grand St. (219-3219) and new paintings of flowers, through 12/6, at Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St. (274-9300).

Carlos Capelán—Maps whose imprinted shapes of human bodies are executed in earth, milk, fruit juices, and other organic media; through 12/6. Knowlton, 568 Broadway (966-2625).

Rupert Deese—Monochromatic oil paintings whose colors refer to specific colors in nature, through 12/3. Hoffman, 429 W. Broadway (966-6676).

Ron Ehrlich—Oil paintings incised with primitive images; through 12/2. Haller, 560 Broadway (219-2500).

Suzanne Harris—An installation of two glass pieces by this artist who died in 1980 and was a member of "anarchitecture," an informal group that was loosely organized around the artist Gordon Matta-Clark; through 12/6. Fung, 537 Broadway (334-6242).

Birgit Jürgenssen/Sol LeWitt—A survey of works on paper and photography by the Austrian artist known for her use of feminist iconography/A wall drawing. Through 11/22. TZ'Art, 28 Wooster St. (966-9059).

Barbara Kruger—An exhibition of slide, sound, and video presentations that demonstrate the artist's ongoing fascination with the authority of the media, held in conjunction with a show of her recent sculptural works at Mary Boone Gallery (see solo shows, 57th Street area); through 12/20. Deitch, 18 Wooster St. (343-7300).

Attila Richard Lukacs—New paintings, multimedia assemblages, video sculptures, and memorabilia; through 12/6. Kind, 136 Greene St. (925-1200).

Keith Mayerson—Recent paintings and drawings; through 11/29. Gorney, 100 Greene St. (966-8545).

Huang Yong Ping—An installation by this Paris-based Chinese artist whose work addresses issues of identity, immigration, racism, and cultural conflict; through 12/6. Tilton, 49 Greene St. (941-1775).

Robert Rauschenberg—A survey of the artist's paintings, drawings, and prints from the sixties through the nineties; through 12/6. Dranoff, 591 Broadway (966-0153).

Susan Rothenberg—New paintings that continue to draw on the artist's personal experience, evolving out of daily life and prosaic activities at her ranch in New Mexico; through 12/13. Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. (431-3685).

Julian Schnabel—New paintings of the artist's family and friends; through 12/13. PaceWildenstein, 142 Greene St. (431-9224).

Jane Schneider—Found-wood sculptures of famous couples of mythology and history; through 12/2. Kelly, 591 Broadway (226-1660).

Brian Shure/Forrest Moses—Paintings of cityscapes by the former, of wilderness scenes by the latter; through 11/29. Perlow, 560 Broadway (941-1220).

Shahzia Sikander—Mural paintings that reflect the multicultural traditions of Pakistan; through 11/29. Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St. (343-7300).

Christopher Wool—Recent paintings, works on paper, and photographs; through 12/6. Luhring Augustine, 130 Prince St. (219-9600).

Joe Zucker/Richard Artschwager—A look at the genesis of one of the artist's early cotton-ball paintings/Recent drawings of deconstructed chairs, Italian palazzi, and interiors. Through 12/20. Nolan/Eckman, 560 Broadway (925-6190).

Chelsea

Matthew Barney—New works derived from the artist's most recent film, *Cremaster 5,* which is being screened daily through November 4 at the Film Forum; through 12/20. Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. (206-9300).

Mary Carlson—Humorous sculptural imitations of bric-a-brac, gewgaws, and other objects common to the typical American shelf or lawn; 11/12–12/13. Maynes, 529 W. 20th St. (741-3318).

Rodney Graham—A new film, *Vexation Island,* in which the artist plays an eighteenth-century middle-class Englishman stranded on a deserted island; through 12/20. 303, 525 W. 22nd St. (255-1121).

Oliver Herring—New sculptures of wire, knit mylar, and paper that are loosely based on cartoons; through 12/3. Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. (633-6999).

Frank Holliday—New paintings from the artist's "Wah-Wah Series" that use the techniques and traditions of European oil painting to develop themes on identity, perception, and sexuality; through 12/6. Debs & Co., 529 W. 20th St. (647-7080).

Ellen Kozak—Paintings that draw inspiration from the landscape of New York's Hudson River Valley; through 11/30. Art Resources Transfer, Inc., 504 W. 22nd St. (691-5956).

Jack Ox—A painted and collaged visualization of Kurt Schwitter's sound poem, *Ursonate*; through 11/29. Gang, 529 W. 20th St. (741-7832).

Robert Rauschenberg—Prints, drawings, and objects from the sixties through the nineties; through 12/14. Kempner, 501 W. 23rd St. (206-6872).

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Cadé—1045 Madison Ave. (734-3670). Works by six painters who were working in Paris in the fifties, including Dubuffet, Poliakoff, Soulages, De Staël, others; through 11/29.

De Montebello—9 E. 84th St. (472-1496). Works whose use of mark-making implies a passage of time, by Berthot, Cote, Novatt, White; through 12/13.

Sculpture Center—167 E. 69th St. (879-3500). "Suspended Instants," featuring sculpture and site-specific works by emerging artists from Rio de Janeiro and New York City at this gallery and at Art in General (see Group Shows, SoHo and TriBeCa); through 12/20.

57th Street Area

Baron/Boisanté—50 W. 57th St. (581-9191). Works on paper by Baechler, Basquiat, Beuys, Embry, Heyboer, Rainer, Rothenberg, others; through 12/13.

Snyder—20 W. 57th St. (262-1160). "A New Naturalism," with recent paintings by Fendrich, Gray, Marlatt, Obuck, Senstad, Strzelec; through 12/13.

SoHo and TriBeCa

API—470 Broome St. (343-2599). "Canny," with works that use artifice, by Ballengee, Brown, Garfinkel, Medvedz, Zausner, others; through 11/26.

Art in General—79 Walker St. (219-0473). "Suspended Instants," featuring sculpture and site-specific works by emerging artists from Rio de Janeiro and New York City at this gallery and at the Sculpture Center (see Group Shows, Madison Avenue & Vicinity); through 1/10.

Visual Arts—137 Wooster St. (592-2010). Works by SVA fine-arts alumni from the eighties and nineties, including Bordowitz, Dryer, Hristoff, Lambert, Peyton, Rockman, Rollins, Simmons; through 11/29.

Chelsea

Marlborough Chelsea—211 W. 19th St. (463-8634). "Icon/Iconoclast," with paintings by Bacon, Clemente, Katz, Kitaj, Reinhardt, others; through 12/27.

Photography

Harry Benson—A three-decade retrospective of photographs of U.S. presidents and their families, from the Kennedys to the Clintons; through 2/7. Newseum/NY, 580 Madison Ave. (317-6500), Mon.–Sat. 10–5:30.

Erwin Blumenfeld/André Kertész—Experimental portraits and nudes from the forties and fifties/A group of twelve vintage photographs that were taken in Paris in 1929 at the Luna Park amusement arcade and show the distorted images of Carlo Rim, an editor of *VU* magazine, and the photographer in a fun-house mirror. Through 12/6. Danziger, 130 Prince St. (226-0056).

Valdir Cruz—Photographs of indigenous people in the Brazilian rain forest; through 1/10. Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St. (223-1059).

Frantisek Drtikol—A selection of the Czech photographer's nude works from the twenties and thirties; through 12/6. Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. (334-0010).

Seichi Furuya—Works from the artist's *Mémoires,* groups of photographs that document events from different periods of his life; through 11/29. Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (980-5454).

Richard Gere—The actor's photographs of Tibetan communities in the Himalayan region from Zanskar to Tibet that were taken over the past ten years and are included in the new book, *Pilgrim* (Bulfinch); through 12/6. Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. (334-0010).

International Center of Photography—1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (860-1777), Wed.–Sun. 11–6; $4, $2.50 students and seniors. "Brett Weston in New York." Photographs of New York taken between 1943 and 1945, when Weston was stationed on Long Island in the United States Army Signal Corps; through 11/30. . . . "Soul of the Game: Images and Voices of Street Basketball." Black-and-white images of the game being played at Harlem's Rucker Park, Nat King Cole Park in Chicago, and other famed courts by sports photographer John Huet; through 11/19.

Danny Lyon—The first New York exhibition of photographs from Lyon's legendary book, *The Bikeriders* (1969), taken between 1962 and 1966 when he was a member of a midwestern outlaw motorcycle club; 11/13–1/18. Houk, 745 Fifth Ave. (750-7070).

Fred McDarrah—A survey of photographs from 1945 to 1997, including images of occupied Japan, Bea poets, New York School artists, hippies, politicians, and landscapes of the American West; throug 1/3. Great Modern Pictures, 17 W. 24th St. (242-2581).

Ann Messner—Photographs and films of the artist' performances in the New York City subways fro 1977 to 1979; through 12/20. Dorsky, 379 W Broadway (966-6170).

László Moholy-Nagy/Michal Rovner—Vintage prints o loan from public and private collections, half o which were in the historically significant Julie Levy collection in the thirties/Wall-size panel depicting manipulated color images of bather floating in the Dead Sea and people walkin across the desert in Israel; through 11/29 PaceWildensteinMacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (759-7999).

Mario Cravo Neto—Recent black-and-white portrait and still lifes taken in Salvador, Bahia, that reflec such influences as Surrealism, ancient Gree mythology, and Afro-Brazilian religion; throug 12/6. Witkin, 415 W. Broadway (925-5510).

Richard Pousette-Dart—Still-life photographs by thi New York School artist (1916–1992) whose paintings are the subject of a retrospective at the Metropolitan Museum of Art; through 12/20 Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. (752-1223).

Roman Signer—Photographs, videos, and sculptur from 1979 to 1997 that show ordinary objects activated in various ways and taking on a life of thei own; through 12/24. Swiss Institute, 495 Broadway (925-2035).

John Stewart/Alexander Vethers—Images of folde cloth by this photographer who worked unde Alexei Brodovitch at *Harper's Bazaar* in th fifties/Black-and-white murals and smaller pho tographs of European gardens and fountains. Through 11/29. Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway (966-6223).

Kunié Sugiura—*Recent photograms of quotidian* objects, flowers, crickets, and frogs by this photographer who is among four artists included in the Museum of Modern Art's current exhibition "New Photography 13"; through 1/10. Tonkonow, 601 W. 26th St. (255-8450).

Museums

American Craft Museum—"Four Acts in Glass: Installations by Chihuly, Morris, Powers, and Vallien"; through 1/18. 40 W. 53rd St. (956-3535); Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 10–6, Thurs. till 8 (pay as you wish 6–8); $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History—"The Nature of Diamonds." An exhibition exploring all aspects of the mineral, from its geological origins to its place in history, art, adornment, and literature, featuring significant gems from around the world; through 4/26. . . . "Drawing Shadows to Stone: Photographing North Pacific Peoples, 1897–1902." A commemoration of the American Museum of Natural History's Jesup North Pacific Expedition of 1897–1902, including approximately 100 archival photographs of scenes from daily life; 11/14–5/31. Central Park West at 79th St. (769-5100); Sun.–Thurs. 10–5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10–8:45; $8 suggested contribution, $6 students and seniors, $4.50 children.

Asia Society—"Mandala: The Architecture of Enlightenment." *Mandalas from Tibet,* Nepal, China, Japan, Bhutan, India, and Indonesia, and a Kalachakra sand mandala constructed by monks from the Namgyal monastery, the Dalai Lama's personal monastery; through 1/4. 725 Park Ave., at 70th St. (288-6400), Tues., Wed., Fri., and Sat. 11–6 (Thurs. to 8), Sun. 12–5; $3, $1 students and seniors, free Thurs. 6–8.

Bronx Museum of the Arts—"Transforming the Crown: African, Asian, and Caribbean Artists in Britain, 1966–1996." A survey of Black British art that is being held in *collaboration with the the Franklin H. Williams* Caribbean Cultural Center (see photography listings) and the Studio Museum in Harlem; through 3/15. 1040 Grand Concourse, Bronx (718-681-6000), Wed. 3–9, Thurs. and Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 1–6; $3 suggested donation; $2 students; $1 senior citizens, free to children under 12.

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"Monet and the Mediterranean: A Centennial Exhibition." Sixty-five paintings executed by the Impressionist during his trips to the Italian Riviera, in 1884, the French Riviera, in 1888, and Venice, in 1908; through 1/4. . . . "Graphic Alert: AIDS Posters From the Collection of Dr. Edward C. Atwater"; through 2/8. . . . "Working in *Brooklyn: A Centennial Exhibition.*" Works by emerging artists who show with Brooklyn-based galleries and alternative spaces; through 1/25. 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.—Fri. 10–5, Sat. 11–9, Sun. 11–6; $4, $2 students, $1.50 seniors.

Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum—"Design for Life: A Centennial Celebration." An exhibition examining the role of objects in daily life through works from the museum's collection, among them architectural drawings, graphics, textiles, ceramics, glass, jewelry, rare books, and industrial-design products; through 1/4. 2 E. 91st St. (849-8420), Tues. 10–9, Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 12–5; $3, $1.50 seniors and students.

Dia Center for the Arts—"Tracey Moffatt: *Free-falling.*" A group of 25 photographs and a video installation by the Australian artist and filmmaker; through 6/14. . . . "Richard Serra: *Torqued Ellipses.*" Three monumental sculptures of Cor-Ten steel that explore the shaping of space rather than material as their primary subject; through 6/14. . . . "Fred Sandback: Sculpture." Sculptures created from yarn, including new works and earlier works from Dia's collection; through 1/4. . . . "Dan Flavin: 1962/63, 1970, 1996." Three installations using fluorescent light and six separate fluorescent works by the late sculptor; through 6/14. 548 W. 22nd St. (989-5912), Thurs.–Sun. 12–6; $4, $2 students and seniors.

El Museo del Barrio—"Taíno: Pre-Columbian Art and Culture From the Caribbean." The first comprehensive survey of the art of the Taíno, the dominant culture in Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Cuba, Jamaica, and the Bahamas from about A.D. 1200 to the arrival of Columbus in 1492; through 3/29. 1230 Fifth Ave. (831-7272); Wed.–Sun. 11–5, Thurs. 12–7; $4, $2 seniors and students.

Frick Collection—"From the Louvre to The Frick Collection: Poussin's *The Arcadian Shepherds.*" An exhibition of one of the most celebrated icons of French art, Nicholas Poussin's painting, *The Arcadian Shepherds,* on loan from the Musée du Louvre; through 1/25. . . . "The Spirit of the Place: Selections From the Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection." Fourteen paintings and four sculptures from the collection of Baroness Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza; through 11/30. 1 E. 70th St. (288-0700); Tues.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 1–6; $5, $3 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum—"Robert Rauschenberg: A Retrospective." The first full career retrospective of the artist's work since 1976, including paintings, drawings, sculpture, and prints; through 1/7. 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (423-3500); Sun.–Wed. 10–6, Fri. and Sat. 10–8 (Fri. 6–8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $15, $10 seniors and students (this is a special admission fee for the Rauschenberg exhibits and includes entrance to the Guggenheim Museum SoHo).

Guggenheim Museum SoHo—"Robert Rauschenberg: A Retrospective." The first full career retrospective of the artist's work since 1976, including paintings, sculpture, *prints, drawings, and performance and technol*ogy-based pieces; through 1/4. 575 Broadway, at Prince St. (423-3500), Sun. and Wed.–Fri. 11–6, Sat. 11–8 (6–8 pay what you wish); $15, $10 seniors and students (this is a special admission fee for the Rauschenberg exhibits and includes entrance to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum).

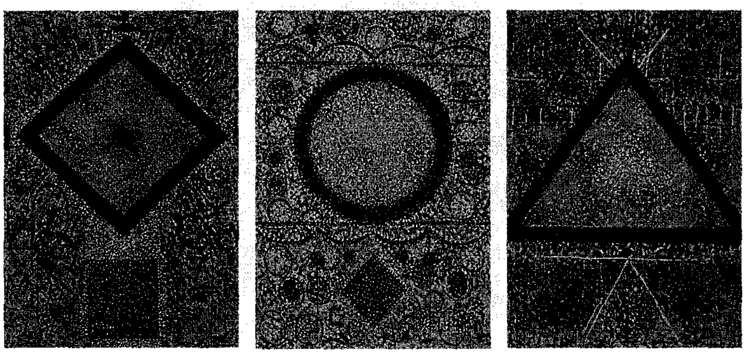
Jewish Museum—"Facing the New World: Jewish Portraits in Colonial and Federal America." The first comprehensive survey of rare, early American Jewish portraits, by Charles Willson Peale, Gilbert Stuart, Thomas Sully, and others; through 1/11. . . . "Camille Pissaro in the Caribbean, 1850–1855: Drawings From the Collection at Olana." Drawings, oil sketches, and watercolors by *the Impressionist of scenes in St. Thomas,* where he was born, and on other Caribbean islands, that were originally thought to be have been the work of the Danish painter Fritz Melbye; through 11/16. 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11–5:45, Tues. 11–8 (Tues. after 5; free); $7, $5 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art—"Jackson Pollock: Early Sketchbooks and Drawings." Fifty-five rarely or never-exhibited pages from the artist's three earliest extant sketchbooks, and 27 independent drawings, all dating from 1937 to 1941; through 2/8. . . . "John La Farge." A selection of paintings, drawings, watercolors, and stained-glass windows drawn from the museum's collection of works by the nineteenth-century American artist; through 1/25. . . . "The Private Collection of Edgar Degas." More than 250 works drawn from

Retrospective Mind's Eye

During his lifetime, the Abstract Expressionist Richard Pousette-Dart (1916-1992) got less recognition than many of his peers—partly because he was younger, but mainly because his paintings from the mid-fifties onward were uncategorizable. Pousette-Dart's heavily encrusted fields of paint dots (often squeezed from the tube directly onto the canvas) had none of the gestural bravado of a de Kooning or a Pollock or the sublime minimalism of a Rothko or a Newman. But over the past two decades, art historians have begun to acknowledge Pousette-Dart's unique—and intensely personal—contribution to abstraction. "The idea that shapes and symbols would have a specific meaning rather than just being a visual phenomenon or a neutral shape is the underlying philosophy of his whole career," says Lowery Stokes Sims, the curator of the Metropolitan's recently opened survey of the artist's paintings (1000 Fifth Avenue, at 82nd Street; through February 22), an exhibit that will be followed in April by the Whitney's "Richard Pousette-Dart: The Painting and the Studio." (Additionally, Pousette-Dart's paintings on the theme of the circle are currently on view at Knoedler & Co., 19 East 70th Street, through November 29, and his still-life photographs are being shown at Zabriskie Gallery, 41 East 57th Street, through December 20.) Five years after his death, the artist and lifelong teacher's message is finding an appreciative audience. In the Met's exhibit, a short unfinished film of the painter talking about his work ("I think that to do anything creative that goes past a certain point, you have to fiercely be individualistic and you have to fiercely be a loner whether you like it or not") has attracted aspiring, like-minded young artists. "Without dismissing the usual careerist ambitions, which are fine, Pousette-Dart reminds us of the idealism and sense of personal mission that most people start out with when they become artists," says Sims. "I think we need to be reminded of that."

EDITH NEWHALL



Photograph courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

the collection of the nineteenth-century French artist, by such masters as Ingres, Delacroix, Daumier, Manet, Cézanne, Van Gogh, and Degas himself; through 1/11. . . . "Richard Pousette-Dart, 1916–1992." A survey of the American Abstract Expressionist's paintings and works on paper; through 2/22. . . . "The Drawings of Filippino Lippi and His Circle." Drawings by the fifteenth-century master, and by Fra Filippino Lippi, Raphael, Sandro Botticelli, and other artists in his circle in Florence; through 1/11. . . . "Master Hand: Individuality and Creativity Among Yoruba Sculptors"; through 3/1. . . . "Picasso the Engraver—Selections From the Musée Picasso, Paris"; through 12/21. 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (879-5500); Tues.–Thurs. and Sun. 9:30–5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30–9; $8 contribution, $4 children and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (923-3700); Tues.–Sun. 9:30–4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); $8, $4 seniors and students.

Museum at F.I.T.—"Fifty Years of Fashion: New Look to Now." A selection of historically significant clothing from the museum's own collection, beginning with Christian Dior's controversial "New Look" of 1947 and ending with the contemporary fashion scene; through 1/10. . . . "The Saris of Princess Niloufer." Nine saris from a collection of saris previously owned by Princess Niloufer, one of the last of the Imperial Ottoman princesses, and a selection of drawings; through 1/3. . . . "Beads and Sequins: Scintillating Fashion." Sequined clothes and accessories from the twenties to the present; through 1/3. Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (217-5966), Tues.–Fri. 12–8, Sat. 10–5; free.

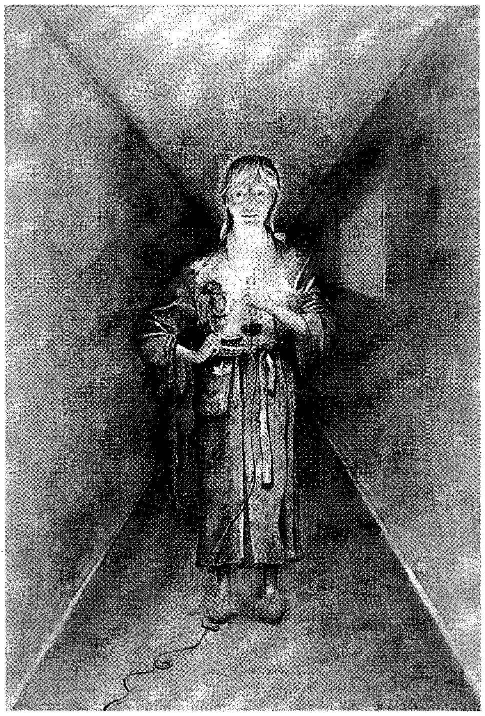
Museum for African Art—"African Faces, African Figures: The Arman Collection." African sculptures from the collection of the sculptor Armand P. Arman; through 4/19. 593 Broadway, bet. Houston and Prince Sts. (966-1313), Tues.–Fri. 10:30–5:30, Sat. and Sun. 12–6; $5, $2.50 seniors, students, and children.

Museum of American Folk Art—"The Image Business: Shop and Cigar Store Figures in America." A selection of life-size, carved-wood shop and cigar-store figures that were made by ship-carvers from the 1840s to the 1890s; through 1/11. 2 Lincoln Square (595-9533), Tues.–Sun. 11:30–7:30; free.

Museum of Modern Art—"Egon Schiele: The Leopold Collection, Vienna." Paintings and works on paper by the Austrian Expressionist (1890–1918), many of which have not been previously exhibited; through 1/4. . . . "On the Edge: Contemporary Art From the Werner and Elaine Dannheisser Collection." Paintings, sculptures, prints, photographs, and video installations given to the museum by Elaine Dannheisser and the Dannheisser Foundation last year; through 1/20. . . . "Achille Castiglioni: Design!" A retrospective of works by the Italian architect and industrial designer; through 1/6. . . . "New Concepts in Printmaking 1: Peter Halley." Artworks created by Halley as digital files on computer disk; through 2/8. . . . "From Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec to Andy Warhol: Exploring Techniques." An exhibition focusing on various printmaking techniques, featuring more than 70 works from the museum's collection; through 2/8. . . . "New Photography 13." Recent works by Rineke Diijkstra, An-My Lê, Vik Muniz, and Kunié Sugiura; through 1/13. 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480); Sat.–Tues. 10:30–6, Thurs. 10:30–6, Fri. 10:30–8:30 (4:30–8:30 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; $9.50, $6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York—"Under the Big Top: Circuses in New York." Costumes, models, props, posters, and other circus paraphernalia and ephemera dating from equestrian John Bill Rickett's first circus on Broadway in 1793 to today's Big Apple Circus; through 2/22. . . . "Beyond the Grave: Cultures of Queens Cemeteries." Photographs of cemeteries in Queens taken by Dr. Ilana Harlow; through 3/8. . . . "A Dream Well Planned: The Empire State Building." Photographs, drawings, models, and memorabilia associated with New York's most famous icon; through 1/11. . . . 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672); Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 1–5; $5, $3 students and seniors.

National Academy Museum & School of the Fine Arts—"The Tenth Street Studio Building: Artist-Entrepreneurs From the Hudson River School to the American Impressionists." Photographs, paintings, manuscripts, and memorabilia documenting the history of New York's first studio building; through 11/16. . . . "The Artist's Eye: Will Barnet Selects From the Permanent Collection." A selection of 40 portraits from the museum's collection, including works by Bellows, Eakins, Grossman, Lawrence, Rauschenberg, Sargent, and others; through 1/4. 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. (369-4880); Wed.–Sun. 12–5 (Fri. until 8); $5, $3.50 seniors, students, and children under 16.



Talent **The first New York survey of Austrian artist Birgit Jürgenssen, spanning her work from the seventies to the present, includes photographs, surrealistic objects, body projections, and ironic feminist drawings (above, *Most Revelations Happen Upon Oneself During the Night,* 1974). At TZ'Art & Co., 28 Wooster Street; through November 22.**

New York Public Library—"The Romanovs: Their Empire, Their Books." A selection of illustrated books that were originally in the collections of the Romanovs, the dynasty that ruled the Moscow Tsardom and the Russian Empire for 300 years until the Russian Revolution of 1917, and were acquired by the New York Public Library from the Soviet government in the twenties and thirties; through 2/28. . . . "Dry Drunk: The Culture of Tobacco in 17th- and 18th-Century Europe." An exhibition covering the history of tobacco in Europe through the library's own materials; through 1/3. . . . "Tobacco Leaves: Selections From the Collection of George Arents, Jr."; through 1/3. Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (869-8089); Mon. 10–6, Tues.–Wed. 11–6, Thurs.–Sat. 10–6; free.

New-York Historical Society—"Signs and Wonders: The Spectacular Lights of Times Square." A look at the development of technology and imagery in Times Square's advertising signage; 11/12–3/8. . . . "On the Nose: Eyeglasses in New York." An exhibition chronicling the history of eyewear in New York, from eighteenth-century spectacles to twentieth-century driving goggles; through 1/11. . . . "To Hell With Reform: The Race to Become Mayor of Greater New York." Illustrations and other materials from the 1897 campaign in which New Yorkers elected the first mayor of Greater New York; through 1/4. . . . "Before Central Park: The Life and Death of Seneca Village." An exhibition of documents relating to the African-American community called Seneca Village that existed from the 1820s through the 1850s on what is now the west side of Central Park; through 11/30. 2 W. 77th St. (873-3400); Wed.–Sun. noon–5; $5, $3 seniors and children.

P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center—"Jack Smith: Flaming Creature"; through 2/28. . . . "John Coplans: A Self-Portrait"; through 3/29. . . . "Jackie Winsor: Sculpture"; through 2/28. . . . "Lynne Yamamoto: Selected Work"; through 2/28. . . . "Martin von Haselberg: New Works"; through 2/1. . . . "Some New Yorkers: Four Artists"; through 2/28. . . . "Vertical Painting Show"; through 6/28. . . . "Heaven: Public View, Private View"; through 2/1. 23-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave. (718-784-2084), Wed.–Sun. 12–6; $4 suggested donation, $2 students and seniors.

Pierpont Morgan Library—"Medieval Bestseller: The Book of Hours." 100 Books of Hours from the library's collection; through 1/4. . . . "Romanticism to Realism: Nineteenth-Century German Drawings." A survey of the Library's collection of nineteenth-century German drawings; through 1/4. . . . "Cultural Curios: Literary and Historical Witnesses." A selection of objects owned by famous literary figures from the Library's permanent collection; through 1/4. 29 E. 36th St. (685-0008), Tues.–Fri. 10:30–5, Sat. 10:30–6; Sun. 12–6; $6; $4 students and seniors.

Studio Museum in Harlem—"Transforming the Crown: African, Asian, and Caribbean Artists in Britain, 1966–1996." A survey of Black British art that is being held in collaboration with the Franklin H. Williams Caribbean Cultural Center (see photography listings) and the Bronx Museum of the Arts; through 3/15. 144 W. 125th St. (864-4500); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 1–6; $5, $3 seniors and students.

Whitney Museum of American Art—"The Warhol Look/Glamour Style Fashion." An exhibition showing how Warhol merged the worlds of style, fashion, and contemporary art, comprising paintings, clothing, photographs, archival material, and reconstructed period window displays; through 1/18. . . . "Richard Diebenkorn." A retrospective of paintings by this California artist (1922–1993), who moved back and forth between abstraction and representation and is best known for his "Ocean Park" cycle of abstracted landscapes; through 1/11. 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (570-3676); Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 11–6, Thurs. 1–8; $8, $6 students and seniors (free Thurs. 6–8).

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris—"Pictures at an Exhibition: An Installation by Christian Marclay." An installation incorporating works from the Whitney's permanent collection; through 1/25. 120 Park Ave., at 42nd St. (878-2550), Mon.–Sat. 11–6 (Thurs. till 7:30); free.

Auctions

Christie's—502 Park Ave. (546-1000). 11/12 at 1 and 2: "Impressionist and Modern Paintings, Drawings, and Watercolors, Part II." On view from 11/14. 11/18 at 1 and 7, 11/19 at 10 and 2: "Contemporary Art." On view from 11/14.

Christie's East—219 E. 67th St. (546-1000). 11/12 a 10: "Autographs." On view from 11/8. 11/18 at 1 "Contemporary Art." On view from 11/14.

Doyle—175 E. 87th St. (427-2730). 11/12 at 10 "Couture and Textiles." On view from 11/7.

Sotheby's—1334 York Ave. at 72nd St. (606-7000) 11/12 at 7: "Sharp Collection." On view from 11/7. 11/13 at 10:15 and 2: "Impressionist Paintings and Sculpture." On view from 11/7. 11/18 a 10:15 and 2: Tribal Art." On view from 11/14.

Swann Galleries—104 E. 25th St. (254-4710). 11/1 at 10:30: "Works of Art on Paper." On view from 11/8.

Photograph by James Dee

theater

Jackie...David Mamet...Mojo

Broadway

Previews and Openings

Ivanov—Critics often dismiss this early Chekhov work—he wrote it when he was just 27—as mawkish and half-baked. But the recent London revival, cannily translated by David Hare and wonderfully realized by Ralph Fiennes, drew raves, proving that the play isn't radioactive when combined with the proper elements on the periodic table. Those elements may well be here, in this Lincoln Center Theater production, in the form of Kevin Kline (who plays the title role), Jayne Atkinson, Hope Davis, and the twice-Tony'd director Gerald Gutierrez. $40–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for an 11/20 opening. *Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (239-6200).*

lackie: An American Life—As ominously titled as it is, this isn't a serious play. It isn't even a straight biography, though Gip Hoppe, the author, manages to cram in historical events both great and small. Instead, it relies on whimsical, ridiculous devices to convey some ideas about the nature of the First Lady's celebrity (the Rat Pack? LBJ? Joe Kennedy?—all puppets) and revels in portraits of the mundane. Margaret Colin stars. $45–$67.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opens 11/10. *Belasco Theater, 111 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

The Lion King—Elton John and Tim Rice have composed three new songs for the stage version of this Disney blockbuster, and Roger Allers, who co-directed the 1994 film, has adapted the book. Nice, you say, but unmoving? *Hakuna Matata.* Julie Taymor, the downtown director who was multicultural long before it was fashionable and psychedelic long after, has reconceived the animated feature for actors wearing Japanese, Thai, and African masks. $20–$80. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. In previews for an 11/13 opening. *New Amsterdam Theater, 214 W. 42nd St. (307-4100).*

he Old Neighborhood—Three interconnected one-act plays by David Mamet, starring Peter Riegert, Patti LuPone, Jack Willis, Vincent Guastaferro, and Rebecca Pidgeon. Directed by Scott Zigler. $45–$55. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Previews begin 11/11 for an 11/19 opening. *Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

'roposals—It wouldn't be a new Broadway season without a Neil Simon comedy. This one varies from its predecessors, however, in that (a) it's set outdoors, (b) young people make up over half the *dramatis personae,* and (c) Joe Mantello, who is not Gene Saks, directs. $35–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 11/6/97. *Broadhurst Theatre, 235 W. 44th St. (239-6200)*

Ground Rules:

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where half-price tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

The Scarlet Pimpernel—You've seen the billboard. Now come see the show. It's got romance, suspense, swashbuckling, and a whole bunch of eighteenth-century stuff; if it succeeds, Broadway could well be on its way to becoming a French Revolution theme park. Pop composer Frank Wildhorn (*Jekyll & Hyde*) did the score. Nan Knighton adapted Baroness Orczy's novel for the stage. Christine Andreas, Terrence Mann, and Douglas Sills star. $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 11/9. *Minskoff Theatre, 200 W. 45th St. (307-4100).*

Street Corner Symphony—The seventies, a decade that increasingly seems better suited to art than to life, comes roaring back in this revue of soul, pop, and boop-a-doop ditties. Period costume and dances accompany each number. *Get down.* Conceived by Marion J. Caffey. $47.50–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for an 11/18 opening. *Brooks Atkinson Theatre, 256 W. 47th St. (307-4100).*

Now Playing

Beauty and the Beast—A musical based on a movie based on a fairy tale. Setting box-office and, presumably, merchandising records even as we speak. Deborah Gibson plays the girl; Chuck Wagner plays the (hairy) boy. Lyrics by Tim Rice and the late Howard Ashman; score by Alan Menken. $22.50–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 4/18/94. *Palace Theatre, 1564 Broadway, at 47th St. (307-4100).*

Bring In 'da Noise, Bring In 'da Funk—George C. Wolfe and Savion Glover's Tony-winning meditation on the pre-Hollywood ethnic roots of tap dancing. $20–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs.*

Cats—Now and for the foreseeable future. By Andrew Lloyd Webber, of course, with an assist from T. S. Eliot. $37.50–$65. Dark Thurs. Opened: 10/7/82. *Winter Garden Theater, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

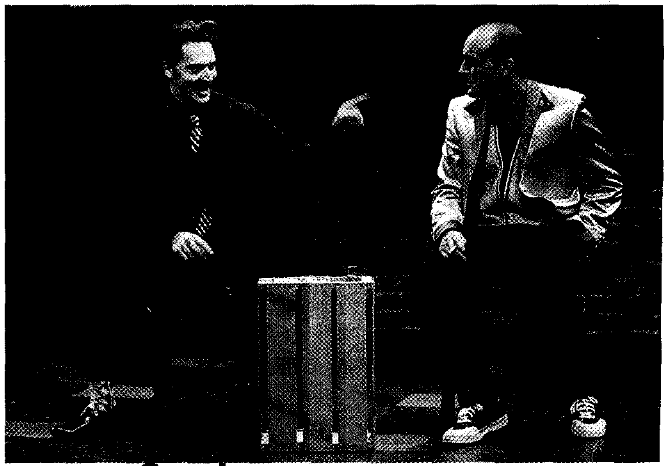
Chicago—It was a gamble to transfer the Encores! production of *Chicago* to Broadway, but since *Chicago* is about women who kill their men and the mercenary lawyer who gets them off, gambling seems like the merest peccadillo. Especially when, as here, it pays off. Bebe Neuwirth does a scissors kick or two while maintaining her come-hither brand of snootiness; James Naughton doles out dearly bought legal strategy like alms to an importunate beggar. If Chicago in the twenties was like this, it was more fun than Periclean Athens. Also starring Marilu Henner and Joel Gray. (Simon: 12/2/96) $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 11/14/96. *Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum—A new revival of the 1962 musical, featuring David Alan Grier as Pseudolus. $60–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 20 mins.*

Grease!—A crowd-pleasing, neon-heavy rock-and-roll musical about a group of high-school seniors in 1959. Book, music, and lyrics by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey; directed and choreographed by Jeff Calhoun. Lucy Lawless plays Betty Rizzo. $30–$67.50. Mon., Tues., Thurs., and Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 1 and 6. Opened: 5/11/94. *Eugene O'Neill Theatre, 230 W. 49th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Jekyll & Hyde—Man turns into beastly man, all in the name of science. Book and lyrics by Leslie Bricusse, score by Frank Wildhorn. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 4/28/97. *Plymouth Theatre, 236 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

The King and I—The Rodgers and Hammerstein renaissance continues apace with their famous musical adaptation of the memoir *Anna and the King of Siam,* featuring Kevin Gray, a former phantom from *Phantom,* in the role created by Yul Brynner. Faith Prince stars as Anna. $25–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*



Opening
Reservoir Blokes

***Mojo,* Jez Butterworth's Olivier Award–winning comedy about London's fledgling rock-and-roll scene, has earned him comparisons to Quentin Tarantino, not only for his paranoid, deliciously filthy dialogue but also for his seamy characters and cheerfully violent plot (a kidnapping, a dismemberment, a drug-addled nightclub coup). Bring Tums. Opens November 10 at the Atlantic Theatre Company.**

The Last Night of Ballyhoo—This romantic comedy, set in 1939 Atlanta on the eve of the premiere of *Gone With the Wind,* is Alfred Uhry's first effort since *Driving Miss Daisy.* The wait clearly paid off; he won the 1997 Tony award for Best Play. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 2/27/97. *Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. (307-4100).*

Les Misérables—The implacable Inspector Javert hounding the innocent ex-convict Jean Valjean; the pathetic Fantine, wronged by the entire world, dying as she entrusts her daughter, Cosette, to the now-prosperous Mayor Valjean; the dastardly Thé-

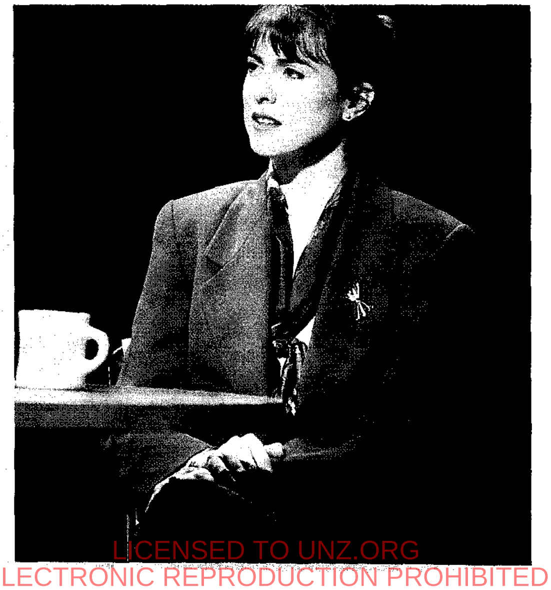
ıotograph by Carol Rosegg.

nardiers bringing up Cosette as a scullion while cosseting their own daughter, Eponine—what a story! Just synopsizing the plot brings tears to the iciest eyes. (Simon: 3/31/97). $15–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/12/87. *Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Previews

Speed-the-Vow

Rebecca Pidgeon speaks in the same halting cadence as many of David Mamet's women. That's logical, one supposes—she is his wife. She is also an actress, a big admirer of his female characters, and, starting this week, a lead in Mamet's new trilogy, *The Old Neighborhood.* Pidgeon tries to articulate why the role appeals to her. "How can I say this . . . " She stops. "There's a great sympathy, an understanding . . . " She stops. "It's as if she's the wise, almost rabbi-like part of Dave speaking." Theater critics, of course, have generally deployed a much harsher vocabulary to describe the women of Mamet's virile world—like "monochromatic," "conniving," and "crude." Pidgeon, naturally, disagrees, though she can't account for the discrepancy between their assessments and her own. One longs to ask what her husband, a master at crass and blustering dialogue between petty men, is like around the house—does he read Norman Mailer? does he snack on raw meat? does he swear enough to ruffle a sailor?—and hopes, equally pathetically, that she'd answer *Fuck, yeah* to all three. But Pidgeon's elegant and gentle bearing, combined with her own considerable acting and singing successes (three films, three CDs, two plays Off Broadway, four on the West End), doesn't permit such a vulgar line of inquiry. Besides, what few clues she gives point to nothing of the sort. "I was struck by his great . . . what's the word . . . his great courtesy, and gentlemanliness," Pidgeon says, describing their first encounter, when she was 23 (she's now 32). "One of his heroes is Miss Manners. That should tell you a lot about him." Occasionally, her porcelain self-possession crumbles, making way for a touching, bracing admission—such as the effect *Oleanna,* Mamet's two-hander about sexual harassment, had on her emotional well-being. As the female lead, she drove the audience to fistfights and stammering post-production tirades. "I hated being hated," she says. "It made me discover that I went into the theater to wear pretty frocks and be loved." JENNIFER SENIOR



The Life—A contemporary street opera set in eighties Times Square. Lillias White and Chuck Cooper just picked up Tony awards for their performances. Music and lyrics by Cy Coleman and Ira Gasman; book by Coleman, Gasman, and David Newman. $55–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened 4/26/97. *Ethel Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. (239-6200).*

Miss Saigon—This reworking of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly,* set in Vietnam during the fall of Saigon, will next week become one of Broadway's ten longest-running musicals. Score by Claude-Michel Schonberg; lyrics by Alain Boublil and Richard Maltby Jr.; directed by Nicholas Hytner. $15–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2; dark Sun. Opened: 4/11/91. *Broadway Theater, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

The Phantom of the Opera—Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster continues to pack them in, recently edging into sixth place among the longest-running musicals. And strangely—or wisely, depending on your point of view—it's no nearer to becoming a movie than on the day it opened. $15–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. *Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Rent—The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as it might be lived by a gaggle of contemporary young and hip types living in the East Village. $30–$67.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*

1776—The book of this 1969 musical, the gifted Peter Stone's masterpiece, is surely one of the best ever. Thrillingly incorporating the potentially divisive issue of slavery, it succeeds in keeping us, despite our knowledge of the outcome, in a state of wonderfully paradoxical suspense. Splendid as was Peter Hunt's original production, this Scott Ellis revival very nearly matches it. It will provide you not only with three hours of choice theatergoing, but also with three very rich hours of life. Music and lyrics by Sherman Edwards. (Simon: 8/25/97). $65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Through 11/16. *Roundabout Theatre's Stage Right, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (869-8400).*

Side Show—The story of the English-born Siamese twins Daisy and Violet Hilton, who during the twenties and thirties went from a freak show to vaudeville fame, has many tragic elements, and this new Broadway musical tries to tackle them. But musical comedy perforce has problems with tragedy, and this show is no exception. Yet when you tally up its credits and debits, you end up, if not exactly in the black, at least in a becoming Oxford gray. There are enough good songs by Henry Krieger to make the weak ones overlookable. There is wonderful scenery, inspired lighting, and the cast carries the show with panache and poignance. Alice Ripley (Violet) and Emily Skinner (Daisy) act, sing, and dance compellingly. (Simon: 10/27/97). $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 10/16/97. *Richard Rodgers Theater, 226 W. 46th. St. (307-4100).*

Smokey Joe's Cafe: The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—They say the neon lights are bright on Broadway, and when this show—drawn from the score Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller composed to accompany the American baby-boomer childhood experience—breezes into New York City, people gonna scrape and bow. A tip, tip, tip, young blood: Buy yourself a ticket, sit down in the very first row. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. $65–$75. *At the Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (239-6200)?* Uh-huh. *2 hrs. 10 mins.*

Titanic—What it lacks in suspense it makes up for in Tony awards (five, in 1997, including Best Musical). Music and Lyrics by Maury Yeston; book by Peter Stone. Directed by Richard Jones. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Sun. at 3. Opened 4/23/97. *Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (307-4100).*

Triumph of Love—It's the Broadway musical theater debut for F. Murray Abraham, an eagerly-awaited return for *Sunset* diva Betty Buckley, and an excuse for Susan Egan, the especially belle Belle from *Beauty and the Beast,* to bend gender. The story, adapted from the eighteenth-century romantic comedy by Pierre Marivaux, twists and turns with each costume change. Directed by Michael Mayer, adapted for the stage by James Magruder, music by Jeffrey Stock, and lyrics by Susan Birkenhead. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8; Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Opened 10/23/97. *Royale Theater, 242 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

Ballad of Yachiyo—Against the backdrop of pre–World War I Hawaii, a love triangle develops between a young naïf, an artist, and a woman who needs them both. $35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. In previews for an 11/11 opening. Through 12/7. *Public Theater's Martinson Hall, 425 Lafayette St. (239-6200).*

Bashevis—Tales of I. B. Singer—A play based on the short stories of the Nobel Prize–winning author. Starring David Margulies. $20. Tues. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Previews begin 11/11 for a 12/9 opening. *Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. (354-2220).*

The Batting Cage—The Vineyard Theatre, which launched last year's Drama Desk Award–winning *How I Learned to Drive,* starts its season with a Joan Ackermann comedy about two sisters who team up at a Holiday Inn to scatter the remains of a third sibling. Directed by Lisa Peterson (*Collected Stories, Slavs!*). $30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. In previews for an 11/12 opening. *Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. (353-3874).*

Brides of the Moon—A sci-fi spoof about four female astronauts and a monkey. Written and performed by the Five Lesbian Brothers. $28. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 11/14 for a 12/2 opening. *New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. (460-5475).*

Cotton Patch Gospel—Harry Chapin's musical retelling of the Greatest Story Ever Told. Presented by the Melting Pot Theatre Company. $25. Wed.–Fri. at 7:30, Sat. at 2 and 7:30, Sun. at 1 and 5. *Theater at Riverside Church, 120th St. and Riverside Dr. (279-4200).*

Cyrano de Bergerac—Frank Langella, who has always had a nose for a star-turning truffle, now gets to show it off in this hundredth-anniversary production of Edmond Rostand's classic at the Roundabout. In addition to playing the title character Langella directs and provides the adaptation. $50 Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. In previews for an 11/23 opening. *Roundabout's Laura Pels Theatre, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (719-1300).*

A Dybbuk—The Public starts its season with Tony Kushner's (*Angels in America*) adaptation of the Yiddish supernatural folk tale. A poor young rabbi dies and enters his beloved, Leah, as a *dybbuk*—or restless spirit—on her wedding day. Starring Ron Leibman; directed by Brian Kulick. $40 Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2. In previews for an 11/16 opening. *Joseph Papp Publi Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (239-6200).*

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—Rex Reed, New York Observer

Photo: Joan Marcus

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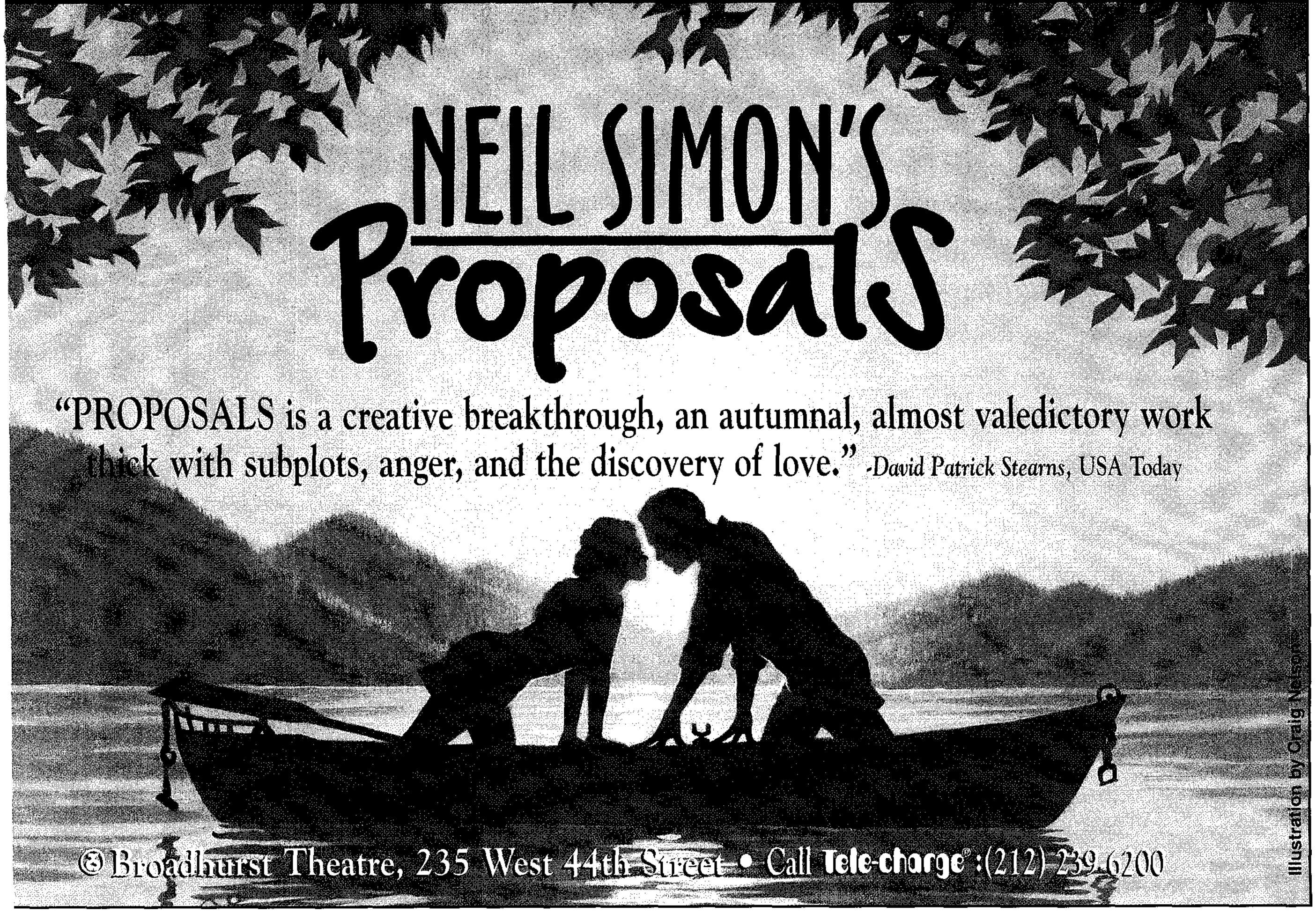

NEIL SIMON'S
Proposals

"PROPOSALS is a creative breakthrough, an autumnal, almost valedictory work thick with subplots, anger, and the discovery of love." *-David Patrick Stearns, USA Today*

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Illustration by Craig Nelson

Opening In Camelot

Gip Hoppe had the right idea when he wrote 'Jackie: An American Life.' It's not a biography. It's not a hagiography. It's a parody—of a country's infatuation, of a political system's pointless rituals, of pop culture's more dubious achievements. Whether Hoppe can pull it off remains to be seen; one wonders whether the Belasco Theater, still haunted by the ghost of Ibsen's Nora, can accommodate America's most adaptable wife. Opens November 10.

I'm Still Here . . . Damn It!—Sandra Bernhard, who, by turns, waxes vulnerable and outrageous in her one-woman shows, returns to Off Broadway for the first time in nearly a decade. $30–$35. Tues.–Sat. at 9. Runs for two weeks only. *Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. (307-7171).*

Jewish Stories Paris Brussels—Ubu Rep presents two related plays that grapple with the fading presence of ritual in modern Jewish life. In the first, *Mama'll Be Back Poor Orphan,* a man encounters his dead parents in an anesthesia-induced fog; in the second, *Boris Spielman's Big Comeback,* an elderly Jewish actor moves in with his son the night he takes the title role in *King Lear.* Directed by Jonas Jurasas. $25. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Ubu Repertory Theater, 15 W. 28th St. (679-7562).*

A Madhouse in Goa—Sex and political intrigue in the Greek Islands. By Martin Sherman, author of *Bent*; directed by Nicholas Martin *(Full Gallop)* and starring two-time Tony winner Judith Ivey. $40. Tues., Thurs., Fri., and Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2. In previews for an 11/17 opening. *Second Stage Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (787-3392).*

Major Barbara—Perhaps the most electrifying showcase for George Bernard Shaw's considerable debating talents, this play, written in 1905, explores some of the authors favorite themes by pitting the rich against the poor, the idealist against the pragmatist, and the young against in the old. $30. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. and 3 and 8, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 11/15 for an 11/24 opening at 7. *Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (727-2737).*

Mindgames—Marc Salem, a mentalist and former director of research for *Sesame Street,* does a slew of fancy math tricks, stops his own pulse, and predicts the contents of people's wallets. $27.50. Fri. and Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (239-6200).*

Mojo—Jez Butterworth's Olivier Award–winning comedy about five toughs who try to launch their careers in London's fledgling rock and roll scene. Watch for shades of Tarantino, not just in the gritty, paranoid dialogue but in the cheerfully violent plot. $32. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 7. Opens 11/10. *Atlantic Theatre Company, 336 W. 20th St. (239-6200).*

Oedipus, The Man—Teatro Manzoni presents Uberto Paolo Quintavalle's adaptation of the Sophocles play as part of the New York–Milan Festival of Italian Theater. In English with American actors. $10–$24. Tues.–Sat at 8, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 11/14 for an 11/16 opening. *Sylvia and Danny Kaye Playhouse, 68th St. bet. Park and Lexington. (772-4448).*

Pride's Crossing—A rich, densely populated memory play from Tina Howe about the 90-year-old (and imaginary) Mabel Tidings Bigelow, world-record holder for swimming the English Channel. $50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. In previews for a 12/7 opening. *Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (239-6200).*

Three Days of Rain—Richard Greenberg, who specializes in contemporary drawing-room comedies, paints in a slightly darker hue this time around. There's still humor here, and romance, too, but at the heart of this drama lie two estranged siblings who discover a private journal kept by their father. $47.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2:30. Opens 11/11. *Manhattan Theatre Club's Stage I at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212).*

Now Playing

The Adjustment—A high-powered, high-strung woman falls in love with her Hasidic chiropractor. *Oi!* Presented by the Jewish Repertory Theatre. Written by Michael Folie. $35. Tues. at 8, Wed. at 2 and 8, Thurs. at 8, Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Playhouse 91, 316 E. 91st St. (831-2000).*

Alligator Tales—Unlike other solo performers, Anne Galjour does not hump the same, obsessive autobiographical note. Instead, she plucks vivid sense memories from her bayou childhood—dredging for oysters, facing down hurricanes, fleeing from alligators—and brings them to life through eight imaginary, interconnected characters. $35. Tues.–Fri. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Manhattan Theatre Club's Stage II at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212).*

Always . . . Patsy Cline—It's still unclear whether this musical can weather the transplant from Nashville to New York, but it does have its selling points, including a six-piece orchestra, a twenty-song score, and a curious premise: Cline's actual two-year correspondence with an adoring Texas housewife. Tori Lynn Palazola stars. $40–$45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 2 and 5. Opened 6/24/97. *Variety Arts Theatre, 110 Third Ave. (239-6200).*

The American Clock—The Signature Theatre Company kicks off its Arthur Miller season with this Depression-era drama, which debuted at the Spoleto Festival, ran briefly on Broadway in 1980, and triumphed in London in 1984. $30. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. *Signature Theatre, 555 W. 42nd St. (244-7529).*

As Bees in Honey Drown—Socialite Alexa Vere de Vere—one part Hepburn, two parts eyeliner, three parts luxury addict—enlists a young author to write a screenplay about her life. Written by Douglas Carter Beane; alertly directed by Drama Desk Award winner Mark Brokaw. Starring Bo Foxworth and J. Smith-Cameron. $47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Lucille Lortel Theatre, 121 Christopher St. (239-6200).*

Blue Man Group: Tubes—Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. Kids love it, and adults can pretend the show's an ironic commentary on performance art. $39–$49. Tues., Wed., Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. Opened: 11/17/91. *Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (254-4370).*

The Broadway Kids Sing Broadway—A musical revue of songs made famous by Broadway kids. Expect tunes from *Annie, The Sound of Music, The Wizard of Oz, Oliver,* and *Bye Bye Birdie.* $20. Sat. and Sun. at noon. *John Houseman Theater, 450 W. 42nd St. (354-2220).*

Brutality of Fact—Keith Reddin's new comedy about a dysfunctional trio of women. Two sisters—one an alcoholic, the other a recently divorced Jehovah's Witness—try out some rather unconventional tactics to repair each other's lives; Mom somehow gets involved, and it's all downhill from there. Directed by Casey Childs. $30–$35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Through 11/23. *Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. (333-4052).*

Defying Gravity—*Titanic* loathers, take heart. Although this is a play about the space-shuttle-*Challenger* disaster, it comes from the reliably twisted imagination of Jane Anderson, author of *The Positively True Adventures of the Alleged Texas Cheerleader Murdering Mom.* Starring Lois Smith. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *American Place Theatre, 111 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

Fantasticks—The musical perennial that, happily, refuses to go away. $35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 5/3/60. *Sullivan St. Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (674-3838).*

Filumena—Maria Tucci, last seen on Off Broadway as the wonderful Ruth Steiner in *Collected Stories,* stars in this version of Eduardo DeFilippo's 1946 romantic comedy, which she translated herself. Directed by James Naughton; presented by the Blue Light Theater Company. $37.50. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7, Mon at 8. Through 12/7. *Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. (239-6200).*

Fly—A rattling, comic flight through the life of a young African-American man. By (and starring) Joseph Edward. $35. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2:30 and 8, Sun. at 2:30 and 7. *The American Place Theatre, 111 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

Forbidden Broadway Strikes Back!—Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof poking fun at the assorted absurdities of the Great White Way couldn't arrive in town at a more—well, propitious time. $40–$45. Mon. Wed.–Fri. at 8:15, Sat. at 2:30 and 8:15, Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30; food and drink available. *Stardus Theatre, Broadway at 51st St. (239-6200).*

The Forest—Alexander Ostrovsky wrote this amusing comedy about two down-and-out actors more than 125 years ago, but the Pearl Theatre Company reckons it has never been performed in New York—until now. $18–$30. Tues., Thurs. Fri., and Sat. 8, Wed., Sat. and Sun. at 2. *Pearl Theatre, 80 Saint Mark's Place. (598-9802).*

Godspell—The first all-black production of Stephen Schwartz's 1971 rock opera. $25. Fri. at 7:30, Sat at 3 and 7:30, Sun. at 3. Opened 2/6. *Victoria Theatre, 235 W. 125th St. (769-8183).*

Grandma Sylvia's Funeral—An audience-participation comedy akin to *Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding,* written by Glenn Wein and Amy Lord Blumsack. When Grandma Sylvia dies, a power struggle ensues among family members. $37.50–$57.50, which includes a mitzvah meal. Wed. at 2 and 7:30 Thurs. at 7:30, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9, Sun. at and 5. *Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (691-1555).*

Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde—From letters, biographies, and court transcripts, writer director Moisés Kaufman has put together an absorbing show about Oscar Wilde's 1895 trial for "gross indecency with male persons." $20–$47.50 Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, and Sun. at 3 and 7 *Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane (307-4100)*

H. Finn Esq.—The great-great-grandson of Tom Sawyer (maybe) teams up with the great-great grandson of Huckleberry Finn (also maybe) to travel up the Mississippi River from New Orleans to Hannibal, Missouri. By Peter Zablotsky. $25 Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Kaufman Theatre, 534 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

How I Learned to Drive—Paula Vogel's play benefits from an original slant: child molestation as an ac of consenting partners, with the child as a willin participant. Miss Vogel has written a memory pla about a pedophile and his big-breasted niece b

Photograph by Carol Roseg

marriage, Uncle Peck and Li'l Bit, names a trifle too apt to ring true. The driving lessons Uncle Peck gives Li'l Bit over the years are a slow, careful—even caring—seduction. Mark Brokaw has directed inventively. (Simon: 3/31/97). Now starring Molly Ringwald and John Shea. $25–$47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, and Sun. at 3 and 7. *Century Theater, 111 E. 15 St. (239-6200).*

Howard Crabtree's When Pigs Fly—An irrepressible, technicolor celebration of puns, fabric, and gay life. Its costumer and musical "conceiver," Howard Crabtree, passed away in June of 1996, just days after completing the revue. $45. Mon., Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 2 and 5. *Douglas Fairbanks Theater, 432 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change—It's a daring innovation, perhaps, but this musical revue about what, in the context of most contemporary musicals, seems an amusingly quaint subject these days—heterosexual love—has bravely decided to buck the trend. $45. Mon. and Tues at 8, Wed. at 2:30 and 8, Fri at 8, Sat. at 2:30 and 8, Sun. at 3. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (239-6200).*

The Last Session—During its summer run at the Curican Theatre, this AIDS musical developed a passionate following; it has now moved uptown for an open-ended run. Music and lyrics by Steve Schalchlin, upon whose life the musical is partially based. Book and direction by his partner, Jim Brochu. $25–$30. Mon., Tues., Fri., and Sat. at 8; Wed. at 2:30 and 8; Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (239-6200).*

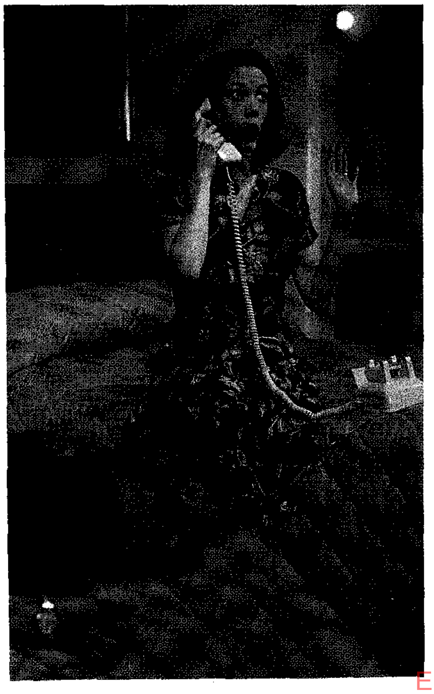
ate Nite Catechism—Maripat Donovan as a parochial-school-teaching nun backed by a magisterium of unassailable moral authority and some mean wrist action with a ruler. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 5. *St. Luke's Church Annex, 308 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

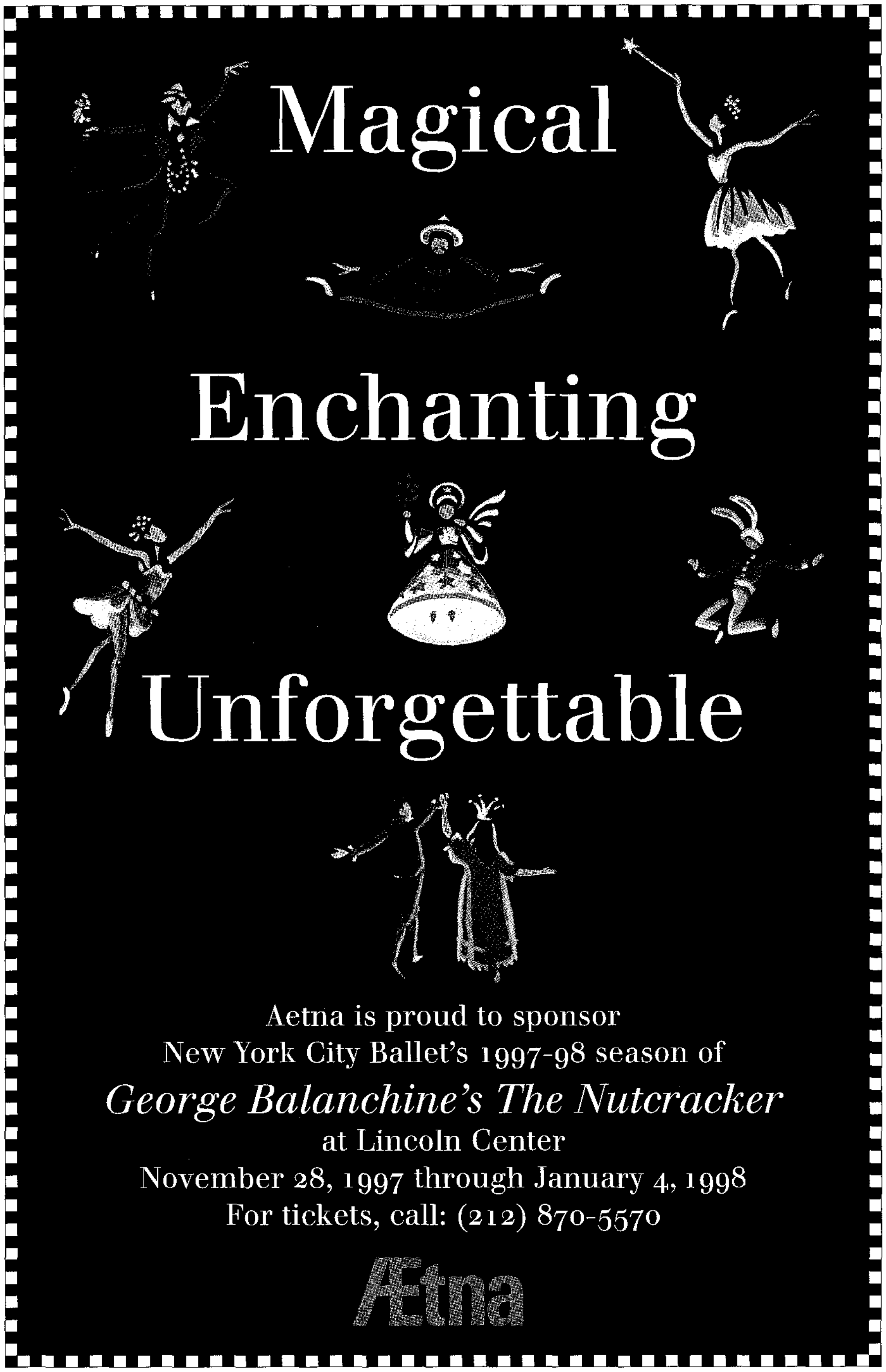
ere Mortals—David Ives presents six one-acts, ranging from Mamet to mini-golf to mayfly mating rituals. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. Opened 4/29. *John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

Opening

Ode on a Grievin' Urn

he Vineyard Theatre, the dependable and cher-shed downtown entity that launched *How I Learned 'o Drive,* starts its season with *The Batting Cage,* a oan Ackermann comedy about two estranged sis-ers who team up to scatter the remains of a third, ong deceased, sibling. Opens November 12.





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Solutions to last week's puzzles

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theater

Perfect Crime—Warren Manzi's long-running thriller about a wealthy psychiatrist accused of murdering her husband, and the small-town detective who tries to prove she committed the "perfect crime." $35. Mon. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/5/87. *Duffy Theatre, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. (695-3401).*

Queen Amarantha—A romantic adventure from Charles Busch who, happily, plays the title role. Set in a fictional kingdom of long ago, the queen, the daughter of a Napoleonic titan, inherits the throne and decides to cast all gender imperatives aside and live as a man. $30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Through 11/16. *WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. (206-0523).*

Radio City Christmas Spectacular—Live animals, Rockettes, mistletoe. $25–$57. Tues.–Fri. at 2:30 and 7:30, Sat. at 10, 1, 3:30, 6:30, and 9, and Sun. at 10, 1, 4, 7:30. *Radio City Music Hall, 1260 Sixth Ave., bet. 50th and 51st. (307-1000).*

Sam and Itkeh—A comedy about a retired Jewish couple whose 50-year relationship is threatened by—what else?—a secret from the past. $30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. *American Jewish Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. (633-9797).*

Secrets Every Smart Traveler Should Know—A musical comedy revue that lampoons the camera-toting and madras-wearing. Directed by Patrick Quinn. $40; optional dinner one hour before curtain. Mon., Wed., Thurs., and Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7:30 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened 10/30/97. *Triad Theatre, 158 W. 72nd St. (362-2590).*

Sketches on Morning, Noon, & Night—Monologuist Spalding Gray, who has turned obsessing into an art form, presents a work-in-progress about a day in the life of his family. $20. Mon. at 8. *P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. (477-5288).*

Stomp—As the title implies, a loud, aggressive, and energetic show in which a troupe of performers dances, claps, and generally bangs on everything in sight. Featuring buckets, brooms, trash-can lids, and, yes, the kitchen sink. $29.50–$45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. *Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., bet. 7th and 8th Sts. (477-2477).*

Tell-Tale—It's part Poe, part *Paris Is Burning,* and all drag. Theatre Couture's summer sensation, starring the begowned Sherry Vine and the befrocked Jackie Beat, has moved, in modified form, to the West Village for an open-ended run. $27.50–$32.50. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Cherry Lane Theater, 38 Commerce St. (239-6200).*

10 Naked Men—See title. Written and directed by Ronnie Larsen, the author of *Making Porn.* $30–$35. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. *Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. (239-6200).*

That's Life!—A musical revue about Jewish family life. $25. Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2. *Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. (838-9090).*

Thérèse Raquin—Elizabeth Marvel plays the caged, hot-blooded title character in Zola's 1867 tale of adultery and despair. Presented by Classic Stage Company, directed by David Esbjornson, and adapted for the stage by Neal Bell. $25–$35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 11/23. *Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. (677-4210).*

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding—A wedding at *St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St.*, then a reception at *Vinnie's, 147 Waverly Pl.*, with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. Wonderfully tacky—and it's lasted longer than a lot of real marriages. $65–$75. Tues.–Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/6/88. *(239-6200).*

Two Pianos, Four Hands—Ted Dykstra and Richard Greenblatt, a pair of talented pianists who never made it to the recital halls, wax philosophical about pushy parents, arrogant students, and smug concert judges. $40–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. *Promenade Theater, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (239-6200).*

The Water Children—Megan, who's pro-choice, stars in a commercial for the right-to-life movement and finds herself embroiled in a battle over reproductive rights. By Wendy MacLeod, author of *The House of Yes.* $20. Tues.–Fri. at 7:30, Sat. at 2 and 7:30, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Playwrights Horizons' second floor Studio Theatre, 416 W. 42nd St. (279-4200).*

Black *continued from page 29*

Phalle—as the lesser of two evils. The Dillon partners' share was $450 million—for which they ponied up $39 million. As with the earlier Travelers payout, the distribution was heavily skewed toward the firm's top managers. Hobbs's take alone is believed to have been more than $50 million. Birkelund's was $14 million, and there were other winners as well, among them Christian Oberbeck, a partner recruited two years earlier who happens to be married to one of Birkelund's daughters.

Dillon management predictably defends the deal as the right one for its employees and clients. "I'm not denying people have made money out of this," says one beneficiary. "But if the motivating force was for some people to collect as much money as possible, we would have negotiated a lot harder with ING."

Some former colleagues praise Birkelund for his shrewd management of what was essentially a doomed firm. "When Birkelund arrived at Dillon, he had a grand vision of transforming it into a top-tier firm, a player on Wall Street," says one. "He tried, and when he failed, he decided to sell it." Others are less sanguine. "What Birkelund saw was one last chance to milk the cow," says a former partner.

Was it inevitable that Dillon Read disappear from the Wall Street landscape? Dillon was too small to be a player, too big to be a nimble "boutique." And there were concerns among senior partners in the firm that Hobbs might not have the breadth of management skills necessary to be a Wal Street CEO. Peter Flanigan, a senior shareholder with 50 years at the firm, blames Dillon's failure on the fact that it was owned for so many years by one family and wonders "if there wasn't an opportunity to shrink back towards an earlier size." Even in its decline, Dillon ranked seventeenth in mergers and acquisitions last year on Wall Street, and was consistently—if not spectacularly—profitable Others are openly cynical about Birkelund's exit strategy. "This was about money," says a former Dillon banker. "People simply got out while the getting was good."

The saga's final irony is that Dillon Read—SBC Warburg Dillon Read, at leas for the time being—may in the end have been *undersold:* ING went on to buy Furman Selz, a lesser light, for five time book, and the partners at Robertson Stephens (bought by Bank of America) did almost as well.

"It was a well-run firm," says anothe onetime partner of Dillon Read. "But i was run as a lean and highly profitabl business for the benefit of its management shareholders—chief among them John Birkelund." ■

Brock *continued from page 35*

White House for ABC, now oversees news coverage in Washington, while deivering pointed commentaries that are confusingly inserted between news stories n the evening news broadcast. Hume says he considers the pieces "analysis" rather than opinion.

In a recent article in Murdoch's *Weekly Standard* called "The Janet Reno Follies," he lampooned a hearing he had covered for Fox the prior week as a neutral anchor. His hostility to the Clinton administration often boils over on-air. On Snow's Sunday-morning show in mid-September, where Hume plays the role of unkyard dog, he openly mocked former White House counsel Jack Quinn, one of Fox's few Democratic contributors, durng the usually collegial closing roundable. (Quinn, who declined to comment, quit Fox a few weeks later.)

SUSPICIOUS OF NETWORK-NEWS PEOPLE, Ailes assembled a senior management eam that, except for the Humes, had no national network-news experience. He drove away several experienced producers and reporters he had inherited from prior Fox News directors and surrounded himself with a tight clique of loyalsts, one of them a former GOP investigator on Capitol Hill. Departing staff members at Fox News complain of a disdain for the culture of journalism among he network's top ranks. Ailes's second-n-command, Chet Collier, comes in for pecial scorn.

The seventysomething Collier, who produced *Mike Douglas, Merv Griffin,* nd *David Frost* before Ailes brought im onboard at America's Talking, was put in charge of hiring the on-air anchors and reporters. He favored looks ver experience, confiding to one x–Fox executive, "I'm not hiring the alent for their brainpower." His theory f the news, according to several inside ccounts, is that "people don't want to e informed; they only want the illusion f being informed."

John Moody, Fox's chief news execuve and a veteran *Time* correspondent, as also kindled a number of newsroom controversies. On the first anniversary of he Oklahoma City bombing, in April 996, he assigned a story about "good works" done by some militia groups. ox's criticism of ABC's exposé of Food ion—without any response from BC—was assailed on an internal Fox omputer bulletin board as unfair and a ypocritical slam on the competition. and former CBS producer Don Dahler uit Fox after being directed by Moody o play down statistics on the progress of African-Americans. (Moody strongly insists that all of the above were legitimate news decisions and did not reflect any political agenda.) While there have been a few Fox coups—the network was the first to book a juror from the Marv Albert trial—the seven-minute hard-news segments that run every half-hour consist mostly of reporters engaging in cross talk with the anchors about wire reports, a format Collier, who has said "The best TV is two people talking," prefers to original reported packages.

For a news channel to gain traction, Hume says, "people have to look to you when a story breaks." So far, there's little reason to. Fox blew the initial ratings lead it had—thanks to Murdoch's London-based news feed—on the story of Princess Diana's death. After a week, it seems, Ailes decided the story was going nowhere. " 'She's *still* dead,' " John Moody quotes Ailes as saying.

Ailes has failed to attract big names for the evening lineup. Even conservatives like Limbaugh and CNN star Robert Novak turned him down flat. Former CNBC anchor Neil Cavuto hosts a respectable hour on business, and former *Inside Edition* host Bill O'Reilly and the watchable Catherine Crier both have one-hour interview shows. *Hannity & Colmes* is a pale *Crossfire* knockoff. All the shows have trouble reeling in A-list guests. There wasn't much Crier could do with two meteorologists from the Weather Channel. "I didn't know weather could be such fun!" she said. Even Fox's weekend pet show was scraping recently, with a profile of a Manhattan couple who keep several rats as pets. Viewers learned from onscreen factoids that "overgrown rat teeth need filing" and that rats enjoy "grapes and pasta without sauce."

Two livelier programs are former New York *Post*–editorial–page editor Eric Breindel's sharp examination of the media, and the only addictive show on the channel, *That Regan Woman,* with Judith Regan, an editor at Murdoch's HarperCollins publishing company, who elicits intimate tidbits from her profile subjects as if she were a ribald Barbara Walters. "Roger's a man of a certain time and a certain tradition," Regan says. "He's a sexist, but I'm in favor of sexism."

Some of Fox's problems can be written off as the inevitable growing pains of a new venture. And Ailes has accomplished a remarkable feat just by getting the channel up and running. Plans are in the works to hire twenty new reporters and twenty additional camera crews as Fox News enters its second year. Feelers have gone out to liberals like former White House press secretary Dee Dee Meyers to even the contributor lineup.

There's talk that the morning news show, considered a disaster even inside Fox, may be replaced with a show featuring a comedian like Dennis Miller or Chris Rock. And Collier's cherished and relatively inexpensive talk segments may be scrapped altogether in favor of expanded news coverage.

Though his strategy hasn't translated into ratings, Ailes is proud of having taken the high road, avoiding blood-and-guts coverage. Actually, for a Murdoch product, the channel is remarkably bland—it could just as well be beamed from Cleveland as from New York City—but Ailes, haunted by his grudge match with NBC, may change that too. "The only solution," says one ex–Fox executive, "is to go down-market, to produce a TV version of the New York *Post.*"

But while Murdoch has been willing to run up tremendous losses for favored news properties like the *Post,* some wonder if he is prepared to lay out the money for a truly competitive TV-news operation. The channel's operating losses are running well over $100 million a year. He made an unconventional offer to pay cable operators $10 per subscriber to get carriage, but Fox is domestically available in only 23 million homes, in contrast to MSNBC's 38 million and CNN's 72 million. Ad revenue, tied to both carriage and ratings, is running only $10 million in the first year. "We are the largest buyer on cable, and we don't have ads on there yet," says Jon Mandel, a senior vice-president at Grey Advertising.

There are also financial pressures from competing divisions of Murdoch's far-flung empire, dominated by a tight-knit clan of Australian executives known as "the mates." The Fox Broadcasting Network has never favored getting into the cable news business, and the powerful Fox affiliates, unimpressed by the news channel, are resisting Ailes's plans to force them to drop their contracts with CNN and make them pay for the Fox news feed, which they now get free.

But Ailes and Murdoch are buccaneers, playing by their own rules, and it may be that Murdoch wants to fight the culture wars more than he wants a strong news product. If so, Ailes may have finally found a home. Indeed, just as this article went to press, Ailes announced that he had signed a new, three-year contract with Fox. "These guys can do what they want, as long as they want to spend the money," says one ex–Fox producer. "TV's become just like politics." ■

restaurants

Signore Sicily...South Americana...Capitol

Manhattan

Lower New York

A.J.'s Niota—This casual Indian duplex makes for a nice diversion from SoHo's French-and-Italian-restaurant stranglehold. The downstairs bar and upstairs dining room are ornately decorated with carved wood and silver doors, and the menu features whole tandoori fish, lots of vegetarian options, and weekend brunch. *337 W. Broadway (431-6222). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Bo Ky—This very basic Chinatown spot has been dishing up delicious noodle soups to the neighborhood since before the Mees and Tang Tangs sprouted uptown. Expect to share a table. *80 Bayard St. (406-2292). (I) ($).*

Canal House—The restaurant at the SoHo Grand Hotel, a beige-on-beige dining room with *Alice in Wonderland* fixtures and furniture, turns out surprisingly tasty regional American fare. Try the macaroni and cheese, crab cakes, and the cornmeal-crusted chicken breast, or—if you're the type who likes to loiter in hotels—nurse a cocktail in the lounge. *310 West Broadway (965-3588). (M–E) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Chanterelle—Spare and elegant, virtually religious, this TriBeCa restaurant is a favorite among those who want a Big Deal. Chef David Waltuck runs a grand kitchen—seafood sausage, cold fruit soups, and anything he does with truffles in season. Wife Karen runs the front room with class and warmth. *2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (966-6960). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Diva—Another hip spot at the nexus of a hip neighborhood, with Italian specialties like homemade gnocchi and lobster-stuffed black ravioli. Iron candelabras and scarlet walls set the perfect sexy downtown mood. *341 W. Broadway, nr. Broome St. (941-9024). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Ecco—A beacon in the wilderness that is Chambers Street. Old-world charm and an excellent seasonal antipasto offering. The very cozy narrow booths line the east wall, and tile floors take you back to the Gilded Age. *124 Chambers St., nr. Sixth Ave. (227-7074). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Hudson River Club—From this Frank Lloyd Wright–ish dining room in the World Financial Center, you can see the Statue of Liberty. But then, the Hudson River figures prominently so many ways here. The emphasis is on Hudson River Valley cuisine, with specialties like venison prosciutto, squash soup, roast pheasant, and Catskill Mountains trout. *4 World Financial Ctr. (786-1500). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Kelley and Ping—The type of funky, lofty noodle house that could only exist—and thrive—in SoHo. *127 Greene St., nr. Prince St. (228-1212). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Layla—A Middle Eastern feast, complete with gyrating belly dancer, brought to you by Drew Nieporent and his TriBeCa production team. Menu highlights include crabmeat phyllo, cinnamon-braised lamb shank with okra, and toasted couscous and almond ice milk. *211 W. Broadway, at Franklin St. (431-0700). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Noor's—This casual, accommodating downtown restaurant features the cuisines of India and Bangladesh. Share an assorted appetizer plate, and then sample one of the house specialties like mattar ponir (homemade cheese with sweet peas) or lobster patia (the tail meat cooked with coconut). *94 Chambers St. (732-5011). (I–M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted two Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *109 Spring St. (274-8883). Also, 240 Columbus Ave., at 71st St. (769-3988). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Salaam Bombay—Sophisticated Indian food has made it to the heart of TriBeCa. Marble floors and a canopy above each table decorate the dining room. Regional specialties from all corners o the country include dahi batata poori fro Bombay, khaman dhokla from Gujarat, an lamb pasanda from Kashmir. *317 Greenwich St (226-9400). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

SoHo Kitchen and Bar—Grape nuts celebrate th 96-spigot Cruvinet, ordering flights of Cabernets or seven Pinot Noirs to taste and compare, but SoHo neighbors love it, too—for al those beers on tap, for the thin-crust pizza, fo a glance at the game on the TV overhead. *10 Greene Street., nr. Prince St. (925-1866). (I) AE CB, DC, MC, V.*

Tennessee Mountain—This 1807 landmar farmhouse serves up huge portions of smoke chicken and grilled ribs, plus regional appetizers and desserts. Bring those breath mints an Handi-Wipes for a $17.95 all-you-can-eat o Monday night. *143 Spring St. (431-3993). (AE, MC, TM, V.*

Wall Street Kitchen & Bar—As downtown grow more and more residential, its halls of finance like this former bank building, are being converted into service establishments. This sister o SoHo Kitchen & Bar offers a similarly extensive selection of beers and wines by the glass plus such eclectic American fare as beer braised short ribs with egg noodles, and pizz topped with shrimp, smoked bacon, and roasted tomatoes. *70 Broad St. (797-7070). (M) AE CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Windows on the World—It's tough to compet with the stunning views from this lower-Manhattan perch, but the eclectic American men makes a valiant effort. A stellar wine progra and dishes like baby pheasant in Savoy cabbag and lobster with clam risotto give diners goo reason to glance at the table from time to tim *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (524-7000). (AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Opening

New on the Block

The new Cafe at Sotheby's is undoubtedly the only place on the auction house's tony premises (besides the new Rizzoli branch) where you can get out for under $20. Open to the public for breakfast, lunch, and tea, the restaurant offers uncommonly flavorful light meals that exhibit the telltale Asian influences of Jean-Georges Vongerichten, who was recruited by Tentation Catering to develop the menu. Delicacies like potato-goat-cheese terrine, lobster sandwich with pickled ginger and chili mayonnaise, and wasabi-crusted salmon with baby spinach and diced citrus salad run $5 to $17.75. To further whet collectors' appetites, objects from upcoming sales decorate the walls. (1334 York Avenue, at 72nd Street; 606-7070.)

Below 14th Street, East

Asti—This 70-year-old Village mainstay epitomizes the concept of the singing waiter. Professional opera singers perform arias and sho tunes while waiters manage to carry a tune *a* serve orders of seafood fra diavolo, Maine lobsters, and Black Angus steak. *13 E. 12th S (741-9105). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Gotham Bar & Grill—Alfred Portale's kitche with its architectural ingenuity and whimsic creativity, serves as a finishing school for t city's all-star chefs before they launch the own careers. This awesome dining temple h long been a staple. *12 E. 12th St. (620-4020 (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Haveli—Haveli distinguishes itself from t Sixth Street strip, for its food as much as its u scale decor. Possibly the only East Village resta rant with an *intentionally* shattered windowpan *100 Second Ave., nr. 6th St. (982-0533). (I–M) A CB, DC, MC, V.*

Osso Buco—Popular Italian restaurant on a muc traveled Village corridor serving family-style po tions of the eponymous house specialty, Cae salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. *88 Unive sity Pl., nr. 11th St. (645-4525). (M) AE, DC, D MC, V.*

Svoboda—The food at this casual East Villager slightly Slavic and entirely eclectic, with offeri like dumplings, corn-chowder pizza, smoke salmon blini, and something called "Siberian sus surprise." There's also a cigar room and an exte

Photograph by Warren Salov

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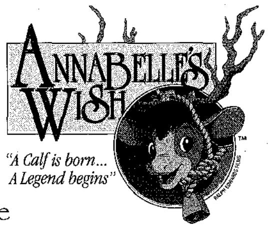

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Metro Diner
2641 Broadway
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2161 Broadway
(212) 873-7000

Nova Grill
2330 Broadway
(212) 579-5100

Piatti Pronti
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(212) 391-7800
8 Maiden Lane
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(212) 949-9867

San Pietro
18 E. 54th Street
(212) 753-9015

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sive spirit selection. *248 E. 5th St. (387-0707). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Three of Cups—Proving that the East Village has room enough for another wood-burning oven pizza parlor besides Two Boots. The "mickey," a charred spud dripping with butter, shouldn't be missed. *83 First Ave., at 5th St. (388-0059). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Below 14th Street, West

Andalousia—This relatively undiscovered Village Moroccan rightly prides itself on its roster of tagines and couscous specials. B'stilla is a standout. *28 Cornelia St. (929-3693). (I) MC, V.*

Bar Pitti—This Tuscan trattoria, with tables spilling out onto the sidewalk, has simpler, cheaper food than Da Silvano next door, but it's just as good a spot to sip an espresso and watch the Village foot traffic. Great fettunta. *268 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (982-3300). (I–M) ($).*

Blue Note Jazz Club and Restaurant—Should you develop an appetite while listening to some of the world's best jazz acts, this famous Village club offers a full menu, with such Continental fare as shrimp with scallops and salmon with champagne sauce. Open for brunch, too. *131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Greenwich Cafe—This Village café, with its plush antique wing chairs and rococo mirrors, has a loungy feel and is open around the clock with a menu that crosses every border. Representative items include crab cakes with lobster sauce and fennel tempura, grilled salmon with jasmine rice, and a veggie burger with minted couscous. No cover for the jazz brunch. *75 Greenwich Ave. (255-5489). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Le Zoo—The newest West Village scene, with lots of Left Bank ambience. The menu sticks to standards like poulet grand mère, saumon en croute, and cassolette. *314 W. 11th St. (620-0393). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Rincón de España—Spanish restaurant offering excellent paella and seafood; very small and intimate. *226 Thompson St. (260-4950). (I) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Salam Cafe and Restaurant—This casual Arabic restaurant ensconced in a Village brownstone offers a broad variety of Middle Eastern food, including kebabs, couscous, and lamb with yogurt-and-sesame sauce, plus lots of vegetarian options. Try the Lebanese wine. *104 W. 13th St. (741-0277). (I–M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Sevilla—Regulars flock to this popular old-world Village spot for its famed paella à la Valenciana and chicken Villary. Be prepared to overdose on garlic. *62 Charles St. (929-3189). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Tio Pepe—A reliably festive spot for classic Mexican and Spanish fare, from tapas to paella Valenciana, with an enclosed sidewalk café and skylit garden room. *168 W. 4th St. (242-9338). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Villa Mosconi—Peter Mosconi and his brood offer a menu as reliable as traditional Italian home cooking. Find this old-world anachronism in the heart of Greenwich Village. *69 MacDougal St. (673-0390). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Ye Waverly Inn—This shrine to Colonial times offers American standards like chicken potpie, baked peasant meatloaf, Indian pudding, and hot mulled wine. The room in the landmark building, dated to 1844, has *three* working fireplaces, and is decorated, in true Laura Ashley fashion, with lace curtains and floral wallpaper. *16 Bank St. (929-4377). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

Brew's—As casual and comfortable as a burger joint gets. This two-story landmark always pleases. Great beer selection, and the always hospitable longtime owners, the Brew family, make this an oasis in the desert above 14th Street. A new attraction is a weekend brunch accompanied by live Irish music, and fifteen versions of that most archetypical brunch drink, the Bloody Mary. *156 E. 34th St. (889-3369). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Campagna—The *Letterman* crowd is at one table, Time Warner honchos are at another, and isn't that . . . ? Despite the frenzy of having become Media Central, this smart little trattoria serves some of the most satisfying Italian food in Manhattan. Chef Mark Straussman is to thank for dishes like rabbit in polenta, gnocchi with wild mushrooms and truffle oil, and grilled tuna with beets. *24 E. 21st St. (460-0900). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

El Parador Cafe—Very possibly the oldest Mexican restaurant in New York City, this comfortable, dependable establishment is known for its enormou selection of premium tequilas and traditional dishe like mole poblano, carnitas, and duck with cuipotle glaze. *325 E. 34th St. (679-6812). (M) MC, TM, V.*

Gramercy Tavern—As a second act to Danny Meyer' much-loved Union Square Cafe, this Flatiron American newcomer doesn't disappoint. The main dining room manages to be both impressive and cozy, the service superlative, and Tom Colicchio' food inspired. For lesser appetites and lower budgets, the bar menu in the Tavern Room is equally delicious. Orchestrate your own cheese course and sample the varied selection of wines by the glass *42 E. 20th St. (477-0777). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Heartland Brewery—A rollicking brewpub with a lively outdoor café and a menu as American as it Thomas Hart Benton–ish murals. Accompany you choice of microbrew with comfort food like mea loaf with buttermilk smashed potatoes, stout-glazed chicken with apricots and juniper berries and—for adventurers—buffalo burgers. The beer-weary can sample among the city's largest selectio of tequilas and single-malt scotches. *35 Unio Square W. (645-3400). (I) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

i Trulli—A Southern Italian restaurant that aims t prove that tomato sauce is not crucial for survival i Trulli succeeds with tasty focaccia, homemad sausage, tripe, and venison. In warm weather, th garden is a perfect midtown escape. *122 E. 27t St. (481-7372). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Oyster Bar—When a fire temporarily shuttered thi Manhattan landmark, its long-faithful clientel were bereft, unsure of what to do with themselve at lunchtime. The doors have reopened, the vaulted ceilings have been repaired, and the regular are taking their places at the counter. Famous fo its 25 varieties of oysters, extensive wine selection and comprehensive seafood preparations, th restaurant is a magnet for commuters and tourist alike. *Grand Central Terminal, 42nd St. and Vanderbi Ave. (490-6650). (M) AE, CB, DS, MC, V.*

Piccolino—A country-style Italian restaurant offer ing homemade pastas and thin-crust pizzas in peach stucco duplex. (The building is a centur old.) Worth trying are the risotto pescator shrimp-pesto pizza, and veal quattroformagio. *E. 36th St. (683-6444). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Rossini's—This elegant split-level restaurant offe Northern Italian cuisine and live music nightl Chef Gilberto specializes in seafood, and privat parties are easily accommodated. *108 E. 38th S (683-0135). (E) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Union Square Cafe—The careful service, human-sca dining rooms, and peerless California café cuisir make this one of the best restaurants in the city. *2 E. 16th St. (243-4020). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Bright Food Shop—A Chelsea luncheonette with a innovative, healthy Mexican menu with Asian ir

Ground Rules:

Here lie a few hundred of the city's more noteworthy restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive, $35 and over per place; (M) = moderate, $15–$30 per place; (I) = inexpensive, $15 and under per place.

Following each listing there is also a code indicating acceptable methods of payment: ($) = cash only; AE = American Express, CB = Carte Blanche, DC = Diners Club, DS = Discover, M = MasterCard, TM = Transmedia, V = Visa. "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted charge/credit card.

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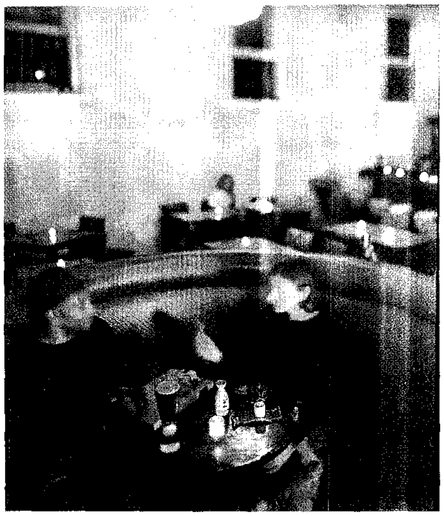


fluences. Excellent desserts and a great selection of Mexican fruit sodas. *216 Eighth Ave., at 21st St. (243-4433). (I–M) ($).*

Bryant Park Grill—This long-awaited restaurant on the edge of the city's prettiest pocket park has been mobbed from day one. Go at an off-hour for Caesar salad, New York steak, soft-shell crabs, and scallion pancakes. *40th St., between Fifth and Sixth Aves. (840-6500). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Caffe Bondí Ristorante—Popular with the photographers who work in the Flatiron district and foodies from all over who fill the garden in warm weather. Specializes in Sicilian dishes like coniglio alla stimparata, pasta con sarde, and cassata Siciliana. Open seven days a week, including weekend brunch. *7 W. 20th St. (691-8136). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Da Umberto—Low-key Chelsea façade belies the extraordinary Italian offerings inside. Getting a table is no small task, especially in the evening. This is a Euro–New York crossroads. A mad cacophony of laughter and chatter in Brooklynese and Roman. Don't dress down. *107 W. 17th St. (989-0303). (E) AE only.*

Simply Pasta—Perfectly situated for pretheater, this moderately priced Northern Italian restaurant offers such dependable, fresh fare as Caesar salad, osso buco, and tirami su. *120 W. 41st St. (391-0805). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

ap Room—New York's very first Austrian brewpub, with fresh lagers and pilsners on tap and a menu that indicates a seriousness about food that's rare in the microbrewery business. Goulash, spaetzle, Wiener schnitzel, and homemade sausages sound like the perfect accompaniments for beer. *3 W. 18th St. (691-7666). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

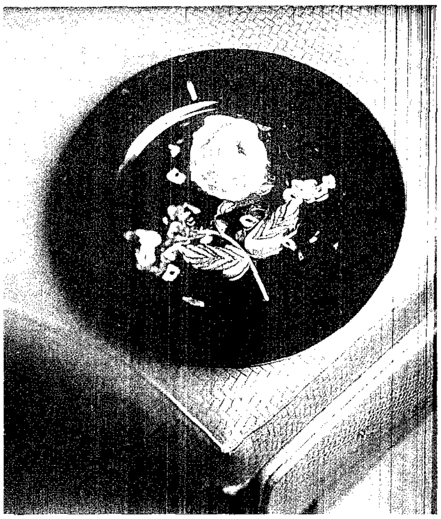
mbassador Grill—Contemporary cuisine with global accents befitting the U.N. bigwigs who stop by for lunch. The lobster-and-champagne Sunday brunch is a lavish, all-out production. *44th St. in the Regal U.N. Plaza Hotel (702-5014). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

afé Centro—A big, shiny brasserie-cum-café in the lobby of the MetLife Building; there's inventive cooking going on here, and the joint is as fun and good as non-expensive midtown gets. In the loud little Beer Bar, get one of the best hamburgers in town. Closed Sunday. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (818-1222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

aviar Russe—The owners of this caviar bar and boutique are also importers, which means that you're getting your Beluga—and golden Osetra, and Sevruga—right from the source. The petite restaurant ensconced in a midtown townhouse will gladly feed you a spoonful or a more substantial meal, like a foie gras sandwich with Armagnac-soaked figs, or steak tartare with baby-beet-and-black-truffle salad. Afternoon tea and prix fixe menus also available. *538 Madison Ave., nr. 54th St. (980-5908). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

ocktail Terrace at the Waldorf-Astoria—A convenient roost for a business breakfast or afternoon tea. At night, to accompany your cocktail, there's live piano music and the occasional fashion show. *301 Park Ave., at 50th St. (872-4818). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

otographs by Kenneth Chen.



Capitol Gains

By nabbing a Nobu-trained chef, the new Capitol has cannily positioned itself for comparisons with that hallowed sushi ground. Still, an East Village informality—and affordability—manages to pervade the loftlike space. The wine bar offers 50 selections by the glass, further complicating the perpetual *conundrum of what to drink with fish.* (29 Second Avenue, near 2nd Street; 228-3236.)

Ristorante De Grezia—As much attention is paid to the comfortable surroundings as to the Italian edibles at this East Side restaurant. The room is done up in golden oak and adorned with brass hurricane lamps, and the pasta, like the black penne with shrimp, broccoli, and roasted tomatoes, gets special treatment. *231 E. 50th St. (750-5353). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Divine Bar—This East Side establishment is all things to all people: a cigar bar, a wine bar, a tapas lounge, and a casual, couch-filled living room where local office workers can unwind. The eclectic menu includes smoked-duck-breast bruschetta and chocolate fondue with fruit. *244 E. 51st St. (319-9463). (I) AE, MC, V.*

Fresco—It's a family affair: The Scottos, including broadcasting star Rosanna, have created a room where you'll find stars at your feet and hearty portions of modern Tuscan fare (rich homemade pasta, thin and crispy grilled pizza, chops and fish) on the table. *34 E. 52nd St. (935-3434). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Giambelli 50th Ristorante—Upscale Northern Italian fare served in a warm and cozy atmosphere. The chef imports esoteric varieties of pasta from Italy to prepare his specialties; the fish and meat dishes are as carefully considered. *46 E. 50th St. (688-2760). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Jimmy Sung's—This elegant midtown restaurant serves classic Hunan cuisine and a sampling of dishes from other regions. Private dining rooms are perfect for special occasions, business meetings, or mini-banquets. *219 E. 44th St. (682-5678). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Le Perigord—This romantic French restaurant near Sutton Place is famous for its classically prepared, elegantly presented French cuisine. The regular clientele, with a liberal smattering of celebrities and diplomats, is the type that dresses for dinner—a good thing, since jackets are required. Open Sundays. Private rooms available for parties. *405 E. 52nd St. (755-6244). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Lespinasse—Marie Antoinette, where are you? This ultra-formal dining room in the St. Regis Hotel—think Versailles and you get the rococo drift—is where you'll find Gray Kunz's inventive Franco-Oriental cooking. The $44 prix fixe at lunch is a gentle introduction to exactly what wonders chef Kunz can perform. *2 E. 55th St., in the St. Regis Hotel (339-6719). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

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Opening

North of the Border

Argentine Raul Bonetto and Peruvian José Santillan serve a hybrid of their native cuisines at Pampa, in an effort to fill what they deplore as Manhattan's South American food void. The family-run restaurant was designed, in bright colors and sleek wood trim, by Bonetto's girlfriend; his mother and his partner's wife do the cooking. Their joint menu reflects the national predilections for beef and pasta (Argentina) and chicken and seviche (Peru), and on the twenty-ninth of every month, as is traditional in Argentina, gnocchi is served for good luck. (768 Amsterdam Avenue, near 97th Street; 865-2929.)

Mica Bar—This quiet side street in Turtle Bay is slowly becoming a spawning ground for luxe lounges. The most striking element of this new duplex is its enclosed deck bar, with a convertible roof that can open and close depending on the season. A menu of light Asian tapas features baked oysters, a variety of satays, and Hong Kong gravlax; the beverage menu, from sake cocktails to champagnes by the glass, is extensive. *252 E. 51st St. (888-2453). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Monkey Bar—David Rockwell's glamorous renovation of this landmark bar retains the original murals and sconces, and the menu offers extremely contemporary renditions of American fare, like tuna tartare with mango and avocado, and baked lobster with smoked bacon, corn chowder, and pommes Anna. *60 E. 54th St. (838-2600). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Morton's of Chicago—This midwestern import has taken Manhattan by storm, winning converts with its tender double porterhouse and men's club charm. Hard to believe it's a chain. *551 Fifth Ave., at 45th St. (972-3315). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Naples 45 Ristorante e Pizzeria—This new, sprawling Italian restaurant and carry-out in the MetLife building serves authentic Neapolitan cuisine, including excellent thin-crust pizzas, baked to order by experienced pizza masters imported directly from Italy. Also try the twice-baked sandwiches and the wide array of wines by the glass. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (972-7001). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Otabe—Customers are ministered to by their own chefs in the private teppan-grill rooms. The cool, contemporary décor—beige tones and wood paneling—in the main dining room brings serenity to midtown. *68 E. 56th St. (223-7575). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Park Restaurant—The plush surroundings in this new hotel-lobby restaurant are much fussier, but no more elegant, than the French-American fare concocted by ex–Lespinasse chef Fabrizzio Salerni. Sample dishes include porcini risotto, yellowfin-tuna tartare in wheat crust, steak-frites, and pan-roasted halibut in crispy rice paper. Piano music performed nightly, and cigar smokers have their own private lounge in which to indulge. *109 E. 56th St. (750-5656). (E) AE, MC, V.*

San Martin's—Continental cuisine with big, squishy booths. Eurocafé feel bolstered by a selection of foreign dailies on the tables out front. *143 E. 49th St. (832-0888). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Shinbashi—Authentic Japanese cuisine, including tempura, sukiyaki, teriyaki, and sushi, served in elegant surroundings. *280 Park Ave., at 48th St. (661-3915). Also, Shinbashi-an, 141 E. 48th St. (752-0505). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Shinbashi-an—Sophisticated midtown spot for Japanese food, with specialties including tempura, sukiyaki, shabu shabu, and sushi in a sleekly modern setting. Closed Saturday. *141 E. 48th St. (752-0505). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Tatou—Gilded-plaster satyrs, bubble-toting cherubs, jazz onstage, and American-influenced French cuisine. Executive chef Michel Bourdeaux has gussied up the menu with dishes like Caribbean-style grilled swordfish on spinach, and cabbage stuffed with mushroom and roasted squab. During the more sedate lunch hour, dine to the background music of harp or a classical trio. *151 E. 50th St. (753-1144). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Torremolinos—This casual midtown restaurant serves a variety of Spanish regional dishes, like paella Valenciana and Castilian-style rack of baby lamb. *230 E. 51st St. (755-1862). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Tropica—Always packed at lunch, but squeeze in at the bar and order the salmon and a glass of tropical iced tea. The dining room serves the most imaginative seafood in town, but be sure to go on a weekday—the restaurant, located in the lobby of the MetLife Building, is closed Saturday and Sunday. *200 Park Ave., nr. 45th St. (867-6767). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Turtle Bay Grill & Lounge—The kind of place to kick back, light a stogie, and watch the game. Should hunger develop, there's sesame-seared tuna, Dijon-grilled salmon, shrimp pizza, and the like. *987 Second Ave., nr. 52nd St. (223-4224). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Zarela—Long a popular place for unwinding—with the assistance of mighty potent margaritas—after work, this popular cantina serves regional Mexican cuisine. Red-snapper hash and roasted duck with red chili and dried fruit are some menu highlights. *953 Second Ave., nr. 50th St. (644-6740). (M) AE, DC.*

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

Adrienne—The Art Nouveau elegance and hush make this a perfect spot for an illicit tryst or a business lunch. A United Nations of flavors, from honey-lacquered foie gras to grilled Angus sirloin. *700 Fifth Ave., at 55th St., in the Peninsula. (247-2200). (M) AE, CB, DS, MC, V.*

American Festival Cafe—Lunch inside this glamorized eatery with rotating American folk art. Skaters in winter and a garden in the summer and early fall make for fierce window-seat competition. *Rockefeller Plaza, 20 W. 50th St. (332-7620). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Bello—Locals flock here for generous portions of well-priced Northern Italian served in a casually elegant atmosphere. Free parking from four till closing. *863 Ninth Ave., at 56th St. (246-6773). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ben Benson's—This rollicking steakhouse has long fed hordes of hungry, beef-eating businessmen and the people who love them. The festive air gets pretty thick by the bar, where cigars prevail, but the dining room is entirely devoted to the consumption of standards like lobsters, crab cakes, veal, and four cuts of steak. Free validated parking available. *123 W. 52nd St. (581-8888). (E) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Bombay Palace—This newly refurbished, elegant Indian restaurant has been serving its refined versions of tandoori lobster, lamb kandhari, and chicken kashmiri to a midtown office crowd for years. Try the excellent selection of Indian breads. *30 W. 52nd St. (541-7777). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Broadway Joe—Located in a townhouse on Restaurant Row, this steakhouse serves a fourteen-ounce prime rib but also delivers fresh seafood and pasta for the omnivore. Hirschfeld caricatures cover the walls, so come find your NINAs while you dine. Discount dinner parking. Private parties. *315 W. 46th St. (246-6513). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Restaurant Charlotte—Offers a refuge from the hubbub and hustle of Times Square. Consistent American cuisine, from grilled sirloin and mashed potatoes to mushroom-dusted cod, in a postmodern setting. *145 W. 44th St., in the Millennium Broadway (789-7508). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

China Regency—This Chinese-Japanese hybrid is located conveniently in midtown's hotel nexus. Try any of the noodle dishes or a sampling from the sushi bar. Private-party facilities are upstairs. *85 Seventh Ave., nr. 54th St. (247-6440). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Christer's—Famous for its spectacular selection o salmon, this Scandinavian-inspired restaurant, designed by David Rockwell to resemble a colorful cozy mountain lodge, is a great choice for contemporary renditions of seafood. Open Sundays *145 W. 55th St. (974-7224). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ciao Europa—Midtown Italian in an elegant, castle-like setting, with ceiling-high murals painted i 1937. Regulars swear by the pasta and desserts. *6 W. 54th St. (247-1200). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Cité—An extravagant French steakhouse, marble an pewter with blazing chandeliers, and a more affordable grill next door. *120 W. 51st St. (956 7100). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Ed Sullivan's—This restaurant's nostalgic location in th landmarked Ed Sullivan Theater informs its classi style, with "Hollywood" booths, 30-foot ceilings and mahogany bars. The American menu—well priced as a $21.95 pretheater prix fixe—offers suc hearty fare as surf-and-turf and pan-seared scallop with truffle mashed potatoes. Live jazz and blue performed nightly. *1697 Broadway, nr. 53rd St. (541 1697). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Frankie and Johnnie's Steakhouse—The oldes speakeasy in the city. In the same location in th theater district since 1926. Try the steaks and th chops. Yes, that was Tom Selleck. *269 W. 45th S. (997-9494). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Java Shop—A full-service coffee shop, offering take out and waiter service. The American menu in cludes Belgian waffles, oven-baked fried chicken salads, and breakfast served all day long. Charle Morris Mount created a sleek, contemporary de sign, with a java-influenced color scheme. *161 Broadway, at 49th St. (246-1960). (I) AE, DC, D MC, TM, V.*

Johnnie's—This small, old-world Italian restaurar has been a midtown fixture for over three and half decades. The menu runs the gamut from basi pastas to chicken, veal, and seafood dishes; th $14.95 dinner special is a particularly good dea *135 W. 45th St. (869-5565). (I–M) AE, DC, MC TM, V.*

Photograph by Steve Freema

Udson Grill—Bustling space in midtown office tower with surprisingly inventive American grill food and a bar scene to rival most. *152 W. 52nd St. (582-5252). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

a Veranda—Northern Italian food. A popular spot in the theater district offering generous portions of fish, seafood, veal chops, and pasta. *163 W. 47th St. (391-0905). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

angan's—American cuisine in a clublike setting. Food ranges from Black Angus steaks to crab cakes and seafood. A trendy, well-heeled crowd at the much-frequented bar mixes with theatergoers in the dining room. *150 W. 47th St. (869-5482). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

attanzi—Reliable Italian in a romantic garden. Go when there's no danger of a curtain rising or falling soon for special attention. *361 W. 46th St. (315-0980). (M) AE only.*

e Bernardin—French-born Eric Ripert carries forth the quest of his predecessor, the late Gilbert Le Coze, for the world's most spectacular seafood. His ambitious signature dishes—scallops and foie gras with truffles, Spanish-style mackerel in Jerez vinegar, saddle of monkfish—have already won a very loyal following. *155 W. 51st St. (489-1515). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

e Rivage—Pretheater bistro: reasonable prices, efficient service, and satisfying fare. *340 W. 46th St. (765-7374). (M) AE, MC, V.*

es Pyrenées—French Provençal cuisine. Cassoulet from Toulouse recommended, as well as filet mignon and frogs' legs. A rustic atmosphere. A lot of theatergoers. *251 W. 51st St. (246-0044; 24). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

artini's—Convenient for pre- and post-theater, with a buzzing year-round sidewalk café and chef Richard Krause's rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and wood-oven pizza. *810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (767-1717). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

steria al Doge—Cheerful restaurant in the theater district serving fine Northern Italian cuisine, with a menu that includes fritto misto, risotto, and a variety of pizzas and pastas. *142 W. 44th St. (944-3643). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

steria del Circo—The restaurant of the moment, partly because of its excellent bloodlines (Sirio Maccioni's brood of charming sons runs the place) and partly because of its flavorful, home-style Italian menu. Be sure to try anything created by proud mother (and food consultant) Mrs. Maccioni. *120 W. 55th St. (265-3636). (E) AE, MC, V.*

atsy's—If it's good enough for Frank, it's good enough for you. Upscale Neapolitan eatery rooted in the glorious fifties. *236 W. 56th St. (247-3491). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Pig and Whistle—This is midtown's notion of an Irish bar. A business clientele and a coming-and-going-to-the-theater crowd can find Irish specialties—both solid and liquid—here. *165 W. 47th St. (302-0112). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Rainbow Room—Still a favorite celebration destination, this deluxe perch 65 floors above sea level offers a variety of entertainment options. Follow a feast—now prepared by acclaimed chef Waldy Malouf—with old-fashioned cocktails in the Promenade Bar or cabaret at Rainbow & Stars. Try the prix fixe and pretheater menus. Jacket and tie required. *30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Redeye Grill—Just what the Carnegie Hall neighborhood needed: a huge room with nudes on the pillars and all manner of smoked fish on the bar. The signature dish, dancing shrimp, is great for sharing. And don't leave without sampling the banana-cream pie. *888 Seventh Ave., at 56th St. (541-9000). (M–E) AE, DS, MC, V.*

René Pujol—This theater-district oasis offers fine provincial French cooking in a sweet country-inn atmosphere. The conventionally familiar menu includes such specials as pan-seared duck breast with fruit chutney, steamed cod with coriander and ginger vinaigrette, and a salad of warm lobster, mesclun, and julienned vegetables. *321 W. 51st St. (246-3023). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ruth's Chris Steakhouse—A steak cooked in butter is the centerpiece of this successful upscale chain's take-no-prisoners march east across the country. Steak served in a series of connected, muted, and wood-paneled dining rooms. *148 W. 51st St. (245-9600). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Sea Grill—Plush, cozy dining room opens to garden tables in the summer and offers a view of the Rockefeller Center skating rink in winter. The serving team does cartwheels toting crab cakes with two sauces, lobster salad with tabbouleh in spicy lobster oil, and swordfish steak at premium prices. *Rockefeller Plaza, 19 W. 49th St. (332-7610). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Stage Delicatessen—A landmark deli that serves gigantic sandwiches, every one of which is worth returning for. *834 Seventh Ave., nr. 54th St. (245-7850). (I) AE, MC, V.*

T.G.I. Friday's—When you crave the familiar, this casual American chain provides predictably decent grub like burgers, steaks, pastas, and potato skins. *761 Seventh Ave., at 50th St. (767-8350). Also, seven other Manhattan locations. (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Torre di Pisa—David Rockwell designed this midtown Italian import as a surreal version of the Leaning Tower. Pane fritto con prosciutto di Parma and fagotto al funghi porcini are examples of the chef's updated Tuscan standards. A separate cigar/smoking room is available for private parties. *19 W. 44th St. (398-4400). (E) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Victor's Cafe 52—A venerable neighborhood haunt with tropical flair. Try the Cuban sandwich or the roast suckling pork. *236 W. 52nd St. (586-7714). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

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57th–60th Streets

Contrapunto—Join the queue in this good-looking, updated restaurant that's added a roster of sophisticated meat and seafood dishes to its renowned pastas. *200 E. 60th St. (751-8616). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven—The country's entertainment-industry glitterati make themselves right at home in I. M. Pei's monumental dining room. Susan Weaver is one of the only working chefs to combine contemporary presentation and technique with classic Provençal on one plate. The weekend bar scene puts the concept-hotel bar scene to shame. *57 E. 57th St. (758-5700). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Les Célébrités—Plush and old-fashioned, this imposing dining room in the Essex House on Central Park South also happens to have a very fine kitchen. Dinner only. *160 Central Park So. (484-5113). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Manhattan Ocean Club—Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics and Brazilian-red-cherry floors. *57 W. 58th St. (371-7777). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Nirvana—The only Indian restaurant with a superb view of Central Park and a varied menu of Bangladeshi and Pakistani specialties. Sample from a selection of curries, kormas, biryanis, kababs, tandooris, and vegetarian dishes. *30 Central Park So. (486-5700). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Rosa Mexicano—Did someone say "fresh-pomegranate margarita"? Yes, someone did. What's more, this spot prepares your guacamole tableside (a south-of-the-border hibachi?). Some of the tastier gourmet Mexican in the city. *1063 First Ave., at 58th St. (753-7407). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

San Domenico—Toques off to owner Tony May, who may have done more for the cause of serious Italian cooking in New York than any other single restaurateur. His dining room is formal, and the food is wonderful. *240 Central Park So. (265-5959). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Serendipity 3—A fun house for grown-ups and kids alike, with a foyer boutique and a wildly eclectic American menu featuring frozen hot chocolate, foot-long hot dogs, and fabulous dessert concoctions. *225 E. 60th St. (838-3531). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Above 60th Street, East Side

Baraonda—When the rest of the neighborhood is dark, this elegant Northern Italian hot spot is just starting to glow. The Rangers celebrated their Stanley Cup victory here, and yes, that was George Michael. *1439 Second Ave., at 75th St. (288-8555). (M) ($).*

Bella Donna—Creative pastas and thin-crust pizzas at extremely affordable prices keep this cheerful Upper East Side trattoria full of budget diners, first dates, and neighborhood regulars. *307 E. 77th St. (535-2866). (I–M) ($).*

The Boathouse—This is a glorious oasis in Central Park where you'll find an extensive American menu, featuring such enticing dishes as the "lobster Martini," house-smoked, pan-roasted swordfish, and grilled veal chop with truffled mashed potatoes. For postprandial excitement, rent a bicycle, a rowboat, or a gondola. Live jazz Monday through Thursday. *Central Park, nr. 72nd St. and Fifth Ave. (517-2233). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Cabana—The Pan-Caribbean menu at this East Side restaurant casts wide for its influences, which range from Cuban to Aruban. At $17.95, a shellfish stew simmered in a tomato-garlic broth is the most expensive entrée. Lunch specials, especially the sandwiches like media noche and jerked chicken, are particularly good bargains. And where else could you find as eclectic an appetizer as the bocadillos, with conch and vegetable fritters, jerked chicken wings, and beef patties sharing the same plate? *1022 Third Ave., nr. 60th St. (980 5678). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Campagnola—This comfortable Italian spot has been a neighborhood favorite for over a dozen years thanks in part to host Salvatore's warm welcome Of course, the flavorful country-style food—Italian bouillabaisse with lobster, double-cut vea chops with wild mushrooms, antipasto—is equally endearing. *1382 First Ave., at 74th St. (861 1102). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Club Macanudo—This plush, elegant shrine to cigar smoking also offers, besides an astonishing selection of smokes, a sophisticated variety of edibles The American menu, listing such offbeat items a warm lobster enchiladas and pork loin with coffee-barbecue sauce, takes inspiration from Latin and Caribbean cuisines. Jackets required. *26 E 63rd St. (752-8200). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Decade—This place bills itself as the Classic Roc Supper Club, and thus appeals to the sort of over 30 crowd that would know exactly what classi means. Besides dinner—which could be pan seared wild salmon with a horseradish-potat crust, duck-confit-and-vegetable spring roll, o arctic char in a fennel consommé—there's 4,000-bottle wine vault, nearly 200 humidors, an original artwork by Warhol and Rosenquist. An dancing, of course. Jackets required. *1117 Fir Ave., at 61st St. (835-5979). (M–E) AE, DC, MC TM, V.*

El Pollo—This Peruvian chicken joint has stuck wit its simple, minimal menu, to the benefit of thi otherwise barren neighborhood. Potatoes com four ways, but you can't miss with the incredibl curly fries. *1746 First Ave., nr. 90th St. (996-7810 (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Giovanni 25—This elegant regional Italian restaurant has its fans, including the telegenic likes Dan Rather and Tom Brokaw, who partake of menu heavy on game and dishes luxurified wit seasonal truffles. Try the Dover sole and the blac risotto with cuttlefish. *25 E. 83rd St. (988-7300 (M–E) AE, DS, MC, V.*

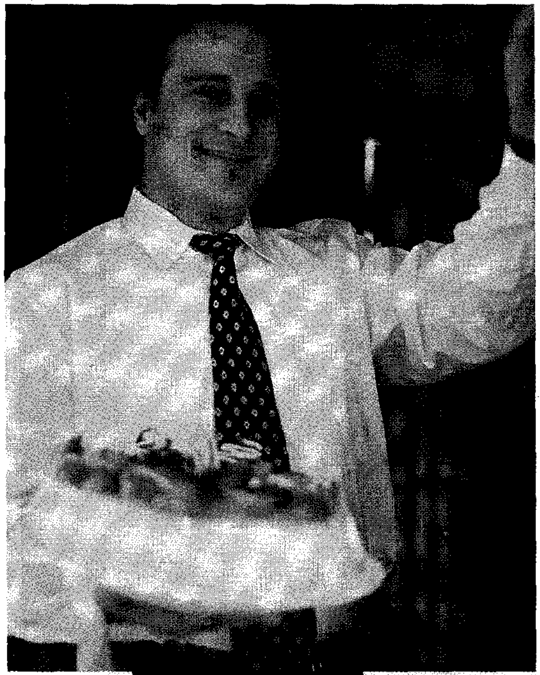
Hi-Life Restaurant & Lounge—A seamless fusion of steakhouse and an ocean-liner lounge. The dinin room's landscape is speckled with round bootl so big and luxurious that they seem structura This place has two gears: As the evening wea on, the young-moms-with-strollers eatery giv way to an East Side hot spot complete with sushi bar. *1340 First Ave., at 72nd St. (249-360 (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Hurricane Island—This American restaura named for an island off the coast of Maine specializes, of course, in fresh lobster and seafoo and offers a better-than-average selection of microbrews with bottles from Belgium and Germany. *1303 Third Ave., at 75th St. (717-6600). (M AE, MC, V.*

Isle of Capri—Three steps away from the hust and bustle of Bloomingdale's, here's a cozy Itali spot that's been around for 40 years, serving specialties like pappardelle con porcini and trippa a la Calabrese. *1028 Third Ave., at 61st St. (22 9430). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

L'Absinthe—Chef Bergougnoux cooks exquisi contemporary and traditional French food for most appreciative Upper East Side clientele. A the brasserie details, from the zinc bar and bra rails to the cheese tray and filleted-at-tablesi sole meunière, feel more Right Bank than Manhattan. *227 E. 67th St. (794-4950). (E) AE, D MC, V.*

Letizia—Upper East Side neighborhood Itali that treats everyone like a local. The food is drav



ASK GAEL

Where can I honor the Godfather?

Don't let the name fool you. Mario Napoli, proud son of Sicily, celebrates his homeland at da Mario, a modest trattoria that wears its tempting antipasto setup like a glorious bouquet. The Godfather will feel at home with the caponata, minted smoked tuna, bottarga-tossed linguine, and the inevitable pasta con sarde (sardines, wild fennel, saffron, pine nuts, and raisins). And entrées are $23 or less, even at dinner.

"I'm afraid to say Sicilian," Napoli confides to a customer. "People think it's all red sauce and meatballs. Today everyone talks Florentine. They only want Florentine. You ask those Florentines what's in the soup? They say, 'stale bread.' What's in the salad? Stale bread. What's in the stew? Stale bread. Don't they ever throw out the stale bread?" Sicily, he will tell you, is rich in fruits and vegetables. "So what do they have in Tuscany? Just beans." Sure enough, the peppers, fennel, cauliflower, mushrooms, indeed everything in the antipasto sampler, are splendid. And we're sharing a special from the oven: red peppers baked in layers with prosciutto and fresh mozzarella (buffalo, not cow, he boasts).

Mornings the padrone cooks, but by noon he's dashing from one table to the next, so eager to please, he'll say yes to any whim. May we have a half-portion of baked spaghetti with cauliflower and bread crumbs? Of course. How about a half of sautéed chicken and potatoes? Absolutely. Alas, both are letdowns. But leave room for the Sicilian cassata swathed in pistachio-green marzipan and topped with glazed fruit—achingly sweet and delicious. "It's so hard to make," says Mario. "I called my father's friend, he's a baker but retired, and I said, 'Come over and help me make this bloody thing.' Can you guess what that is?" He points to a gleaming, unidentifiable curlicue. "It's squash," he says. "Candied squash. That's Sicilian." (883 First Avenue, near 50th Street; 750-1804.)

Photograph by Matthew Salacu

from all regions; the red snapper with fresh vegetables is a standout, as are the homemade desserts, and the wine list has won awards. Live piano music nightly. *1352 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (517-2244). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

lark's—Decked out like an English library, with plump, tasseled pillows to nest against. Fine East-West cooking and first-rate desserts. *25 E. 77th St., in the Mark Hotel (879-1864). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

ino's—Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. *1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (988-0002). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

ark Avenue Cafe—A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and off-duty get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the haute neighbors rapt with signature dishes like rack of lamb and his swordfish chop. *100 E. 63rd St. (644-1900). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

ost House—Clubby and comfortable, this handsome dining room specializes in good quality and big portions. The peppery Cajun-style steak is a favorite, especially with a side order of French fries or onion rings. There are dishes with decidedly less cholesterol—poached salmon, say, or lemon chicken—but this isn't a place to watch your waistline. Seriously. *28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (935-2888). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

el & Poivre—Stanching the flow downtown for bistro fare. Regulars find what they are looking for in this quaint, countrified space. The country-French cuisine includes specialties like steak au poivre, bouillabaisse, and roasted chicken, and the prix fixe menus are a bargain. *853 Lexington Ave., nr. 64th St. (517-5780). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

attoria Libertá—This Italian trattoria specializes in homemade pasta, and commemorates everybody's favorite outdoor artwork with a Statue of Liberty crown motif. *1574 Second Ave. nr. 81st St. (772-0752). (M) AE, MC, V.*

vins Restaurant—With a staff consisting entirely of identical twins, this is the only restaurant in town where you're meant to see double. The menu features American food with a doubles theme, from twin lobsters every Tuesday night to double chocolate fondue. There's an outdoor garden and space for private parties. On Monday nights, children under 10 eat free (until 9 P.M.) when accompanied by an adult. *1712 Second Ave., at 89th St. (987-1111). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Above 60th Street, West Side

lla Luna—Consistently good neighborhood Northern Italian, with rotating art exhibits and a seasonal antipasto table. *584 Columbus Ave., nr. 88th St. (877-2267). (M) AE, MC, V.*

fe des Artistes—A smartly run, wonderfully romantic bistro with frolicking nudes on the walls. Open and serving all the time. Stop in before or after a jaunt to Lincoln Center. *1 W. 67th St. (877-3500). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

lphini—The happy hordes huddled over their plates in this candlelit restaurant love the romantic atmosphere and the wide-ranging Mediterranean menu. Try the paella, the lobster-tail-and-calamari risotto, and the sangria. The sidewalk café and cigar bar make smokers feel welcome. *519 Columbus Ave., at 85th St. (579-1145). (M) AE.*

briela's—Real Mexican food. Don't come here for bulging burritos, but for fragrant chicken soup, steamed tamales that taste like corn, and tender pork marinated in Seville orange juice and spices. Try the *licuados*, fruit shakes, and the *aguas frescas*, fresh-fruit drinks, to cool off. *685 Amsterdam Ave., at 93rd St. (961-0574). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Life Bar & Grill—Big-city brasserie with retro feel—*and* a completely au courant sushi bar. During the week, the mahogany French doors, an overstuffed banquette, and the oversize goldfish tanks provide a cozy refuge for the neighborhood. Fine food that ranges from steamed dumplings to strawberry sundaes. After dinner every weekend, a D.J. tilts the place toward a party. *477 Amsterdam Ave., at 83rd St. (787-7199). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Iridium Jazz Club—The American food in this subterranean jazz club will satisfy high and low cravings for everything from lobster to fried chicken. *44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Merlot Bar and Grill—The overwrought, fantastic architecture of what was formerly Iridium restaurant has been converted into this toned-down homage to the grape Merlot, of which there are 50 varieties. Representative French-American menu items include Brie en croute and salmon with lobster potatoes. *48 W. 63rd St. (363-7568). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Pasha—The Turkish food served here—octopus salad, grilled quail, lamb chops, artichokes in olive oil—suits quite well the current craze for all things Mediterranean. Both the stucco-walled dining room and a separate room for smokers are casually intimate. *70 W. 71st St. (579-8751). (M) AE only.*

Tofu—The newest Asian arrival on the Upper West Side features both Chinese and Japanese food, including fresh, handmade noodles. Lots of bargains, including daily half-price sushi and lunch specials. *2741 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-7373). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

West 63rd Street Steakhouse—Mahogany tables and red suede walls make this nice-ified steakhouse less stultifying than its midtown brethren. Twenty-foot ceilings allow for a spectacular view of Lincoln Center, and there are seafood and pasta for those who enjoy the company of a meat-eater. *44 W. 63rd St. (246-6363). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Brooklyn

Casa Pepe—Mexican and Spanish fare meld in this elegant restaurant, with garden dining in fine weather and a fireplace to warm up the gray days of winter. The seafood-heavy menu finds best expression in the zarzuela de mariscos, the paella marinera, and the tacos Vera Cruz. *114 Bay Ridge Ave. (718-833-8865). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Cucina—A labor of love. Northern Italian in an elegant and very well appointed room. Sensational antipasti. *256 Fifth Ave., nr. Garfield Pl. (718-230-0711). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Lundy Bros.—This restored landmark restaurant serves a wide-ranging menu of fish, pasta, chicken, and steak but specializes in lobster and other varieties of seafood. Don't miss the oyster bar or the reconstructed shore dinner. Sunday brunch buffet available. *1901 Emmons Ave. (718-743-0022). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Queens

Pearson's Texas Barbecue—Deservedly heralded as New York's best barbecue, this cozy Queens joint draws fans from much farther than across the East River. The barbecued Texas beef is sublime. *5-16 51st Ave., Long Island City (718-937-3030). (I) ($).*

Staten Island

Aesop's Tables—Arrive by ferry or bridge to this charming bistro and garden that serves inventive, bold Mediterranean fare with an emphasis on handpicked fresh seafood. *1233 Bay St., Rosebank (718-720-2005). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Westchester

La Cremaillere—Make sure to try this charming French restaurant even if you're not lucky enough to inhabit this posh suburb. The Widow Brush House, built in 1750, has been transformed into a modern-day source of such French country fare as roasted rack and leg of lamb with Provençal herbs, and warm brandied banana-and-raspberry tart. *46 Bedford-Banksville Rd., Bedford (914-234-9647). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Stevens *continued from page 100*

on drag, we are actually presented with one of his wigs, framed, and invited to study what the curators identify as "Cosmetics and Toiletries Used by Warhol," which include Visine, lecithin, pimple stuff, and "Semokot Tablets for Gentle Bowel Stimulation." This museum worship of the relics of Saint Andy—which almost matches Warhol's own hoarding—is hilarious. (Thank goodness he didn't save his toenail clippings.) But Warhol's treatment of his body is *not* just an interesting eccentricity or a comment on drag, gender, and personal transformation. It is a powerful, frightening vision of a self-made man who believed only in artificial surfaces.

Like all serious dandies, Warhol is redolent of death. Much of his best art—the car crashes, electric chairs, skulls, and shadow paintings—concerns the end of the body. His collecting of everything from dresses to photographs of the latest event preserves, protects, and embalms passing fashion. And he is never just the life of the party: He is also its death. He is spectral; the celebrities come and go; he drifts past in black and white. A great photograph by Richard Misrach depicts a portrait of Warhol that some people have ripped and torn. The face seems a terrifying mask with nothing behind it. The exhibition is itself a morgue of dead parties. It has the tidying-up, melancholy air of the morning after. Warhol's circle was steeped in drug overdoses, suicide, and disease. Why isn't more made of this shadow? Drugs, in particular, were a vital part of the Warhol style, look, and scene, even if Warhol himself did not use them. How can one depict the Factory without making a point of heroin or describe the nightclub scene without emphasizing cocaine?

Warhol was also a master of the bon mot, another defining aspect of the significant dandy. Unfortunately, visitors to this exhibition may smile at a film clip of kvetching transvestites without coming away with a real sense of how critical comedy was to Warhol's approach to style. He was a master of the deadpan aphorism; he satirized his glamorous milieu by celebrating it—a remarkable trick of sensibility. But Warhol's most powerful gesture, oddly enough, was the heightened surrender to celebrity culture. The passivity was unprecedented, radical, frightful, controlling—revelatory. I prefer artists who resist rather than define the weaknesses of their societies, but there can be no doubt that Warhol brilliantly mapped the territory. He played both ends of the fame game, becoming at once a voyeur and an exhibitionist. The mirror staring at the mirror. Is this something to admire? Not easily. Not without shading. ■

nightlife

Chemical Brothers...Ruth Brown...Cramps

Concerts

Sandra Bernhard—Radical comedian in the eighties, Madonna sidekick in the early nineties, talk-show regular today, Bernhard somehow feels the need to use this run at the Westbeth Theatre to declare her relevance. "I'm Still Here, Dammit!" lasts long enough to make the title's point; but with any luck, by show's end, it won't even seem relevant. 11/11–11/15 and 11/18–11/22 at 8 P.M. *Westbeth Theatre, 151 Bank St. (691-2272). $30–$35.*

Ruth Brown—The night after co-headlining Tramps's book party for *Rolling Stone's* women-in-rock tome, Miss Rhythm heads uptown (technically, anyway—whether the Columbia campus counts as "uptown" is open to debate) for her own gig. Even as she approaches 70, Brown throws off enough high-spirited, theatrical raunch to turn a staid college theater into a rump-shaking, sawdust-on-the-floor roadhouse. So watch out. 11/14 at 8 P.M. *Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. (854-7799). $15.*

Betty Buckley—With her lush, brassy voice, Buckley is pretty much the contemporary embodiment of Broadway. Thus, for this date, she brings a bit of the Great White Way to the boroughs, delivering faves from *Cats, 1776, Sunset Boulevard,* and several other shows she's starred in. 11/15 at 8 P.M. *Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College (718-951-4500). $28–$37.*

"Dave Grusin Presents *West Side Story*"—Gloria Estefan stars in the Carnegie Hall Jazz Band's high-watt (though white-wine-jazz-inflected) concert commemorating the musical's fortieth anniversary. 11/13 at 8 P.M. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800). $18–$55.*

Chemical Brothers—How do you know when a rock band's fulfilled its commercial promise? When it spawns hordes of imitators, all of whom hurtle frighteningly up the charts. Guess that means the Brit Brothers haven't completely achieved their potential in that respect. For while there's now an endless supply of rock-techno fusionists out there, only the Chemical Brothers have attained any crossover status to speak of. Mercifully, the *faux frères* remain endlessly entertaining in their knob-twiddling hig jinks. 11/14–11/15 at 9:30 P.M. *Hamme stein Ballroom at the Manhattan Center, 31 W 34th St. (307-7171). $25.*

The Cramps—Back in the late seventies, befor knotty-pine rec rooms figured in Calvi Klein ads, "trailer-park chic" wasn't an issu in most of America: You were one (traile park) or the other (chic), but not both. Th exception was the Cramps, whose *Rock Horror Picture Show* leaders, Lux Interio and Poison Ivy Rorschach, rolled white trash values and Hollywood glamour int one irresistably dirty package. The band latest release, *Big Beat From Badsville,* retain all the original shock-rock camp valu along with plenty of scuzzy guitar ton and other classic Cramps-isms. With Guita Wolf (see box, this page) and Demolitio Doll Rods. 11/15 at 8 P.M. *Roseland, 239 52nd St. (307-7171). $15.*

Demon Drummers of Japan: Ondekoza—11/18 8 P.M. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., 57th St. (247-7800). $25–$45.*

Linda Eder—11/14 at 11 P.M. *Town Hall, 12 W. 43rd St. (307-7171). $30–$45.*

"In Celebration of Life VI"—Benefitting Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, the annu charity concert stars a host of musical theater's leading lights (Rue McLanaha Donna Murphy, Ann Crumb, Judy Kuh and at least one revived disco legend (Vicki Sue Robinson). 11/16 at 8 P.M. *Th Church of St. Paul the Apostle, Columbus Av at 59th St. (265-3495, ext. 309). $30–$60*

"Jewish Voices in America"—The Ahn Trio, A hambra, and David Krakauer's Klezm Madness! 11/18 at 8 P.M. *92nd St. Y, 13 Lexington Ave. (996-1100). $25.*

Rickie Lee Jones—11/15 at 8 P.M. *Beacon Th atre, 2124 Broadway, at 75th St. (496-7070 $35–$50.*

Ali Akbar Khan—With Zakir Hussain 11/15 at 8 P.M. *Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd (840-2824). $30.*

David Krakauer & Klezmer Madness!—T wonderfully inventive clarinetist leads groundbreaking klezmer-jazz-fusion outf 11/15 at 8 P.M. *St. Ann's, 157 Montague S Brooklyn. (718-834-8794). $20–$25.*

Oliver Lake—The World Saxophone Quart vet performs the first week of his ne opus, *Matador of First and First,* which ru three weeks. 11/14–11/16 at 7:30 P.M.

Talent

A Wolf in Cheap Clothing

It hardly matters that on a randomly selected track from Guitar Wolf's fourth American CD, *Planet of the Wolves* (Matador), the only comprehensible words are "Oh, yeah!" Because whether they're singing in English or Japanese, the Tokyo trio's message is crystal-clear—punk rock is alive and well and riding a surfboard toward a garage near you. In the United States, "punk" may now denote No Doubt's FM-friendly blend of peppy guitars and sanitized pop melodies. But in Japan, the genre remains rooted in willfully sloppy musicianship, gutter-level production values, and dangerous living. Questioned about his influences, singer-guitarist Seiji replies with amiable terseness: "The Ramones. Joan Jett and the Blackhearts. Link Wray." He pauses. "Elvis," he says with the pithiness available only to speakers of English as a Broken Language, "had great genius-action. Bruce Lee, too." To further elucidate the equal importance of content and form in rock and roll, he explains his twofold admiration for Poison Ivy, guitarist of the Cramps. "Her guitar playing is great," he says of the old-school punk-rockabilly integrationist. "And she has best shape of standing. Standing-pose is genius." (Seiji has had ample time to admire Ivy's stance: Guitar Wolf is midway through a six-week stint—the band's ninth U.S. tour—opening for the Cramps.) Such attention to detail comes at a cost. Seiji recalls a time when his band couldn't settle on a name, resulting in some serious confusion: "First show, Moon Wolf. Second show, Chicken Wolf. Third show, Guitar Wolf." Good choice. Catch Guitar Wolf's own nitro-burning genius-action at Roseland, November 15.

ETHAN SMITH

First names only: Seiji (center) with co-Wolves Billy and Toru.

122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. (477-5288). $12.

Matchbox 20—11/13 at 8:30 P.M. *Hammerstein Ballroom at the Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. (307-7171). $18.50.*

New York Autumn Blues Festival—The final two nights of a four-part series. 11/13: *Blues Love Dance Connection* mingles traditional North Carolina blues and dance choreographed by Dianne McIntyre. 11/15: The Muddy Waters Tribute Band reunites Waters vets Luther "Guitar Junior" Johnson, Pinetop Perkins, and Jerry Portnory at 8 P.M. *Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (864-5400). $25.*

umou Sangare—11/16 at 7 P.M. *Symphony Space, Broadway, at 95th St. (864-5400). $25.*

Clubland

rlene Grocery—The Lower East Side's newish, hippish, and appealingly inexpensive (okay, free) rock and folk venue. 11/4: Mary Lee's Corvette. 11/12: Altra. 11/16: Deb Pasternek. 11/18: Disciples of Agriculture; Hot Water. *95 Stanton St. (358-1633). $.*

he Baggot Inn—Once the Sun Mountain Cafe, this NYU-area subterranean grotto draws a variety of folkies, and the attendant sweater-wearing masses. 11/12: Tao Jones; Andrew Baum; Leo; Loving Trance. 11/13: 46 Bliss; Sam McIllvain; Bhang; Industrial Teepee. 11/14: Andy If; Ed Ryan; Eytan; Dax and the Gods of Dave; Ensemble Uniqua. *82 W. 3rd St. (477-0622). $.*

ottom Line—A top-notch venue—with great sound, good sight lines, and pretty decent fries—given to rock, jazz, and folk artists of all stripes. 11/12: Peter Himmelman; Catie Curtis. 11/13: Nightbirds featuring Meryn Cadell, Veda Hille, and Victoria Shaw. 11/14–11/15: Michael Hedges. 11/16: Full Circle: The Music of Harry Chapin. *15 W. 4th St. (228-7880).*

rownies—Avenue A's divey post-college rock spot, with good tap beers, on-the-rise bands, and the occasional big name trying to keep a low profile. Cozy and congenial, even if you're not pierced. Shows nightly at 9. 11/11: Cardinal Woolsey; Love American Style. 11/12: Baby Steps; Debby Schwartz & Friends. 11/13: Ricanstruction. 11/17: Mercy Rule. 11/18: David Yazbek; Chris Stills. *169 Ave. A, at 11th St. (420-8392). $.*

BGB & OMFUG—Ground zero of punk's Stateside explosion and, twenty years later, still a smoking, flyer-strewn pit—in a good way. *315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052). $.*

hicago B.L.U.E.S.—A downtown blueserie, comfortably down-home, with living-room couches behind the stage. Dedicated to bringing us the best and brightest from the midwestern blues capital. 11/13: Queen Bee & The Blue Hornet Band. 11/14–11/15: Guitar Shorty. *73 Eighth Ave., bet. 13th and 14th Sts. (924-9755). $.*

oney Island High—Originally a glam-trash revival hall, this two-level East Village funhouse now reflects the neighborhood's cultural diversity, with indie-rock and punk bands sharing the venue with some of the city's wackiest parties. 11/11: Dismemberment Plan; Shiner. 11/14: World Famous Blue Jays Rig Rock Revue. *15 St. Marks Pl. (674-7959).*

he Cooler—The meatpacking district's subterranean, steel-corridored home to alternative rockers, avant-garde-jazz musicians, and mind-expanding D.J.'s. A sleekly refurbished meat locker with black light, moody atmosphere, and a Patti Smith photo. 11/14–11/15: Silver Apples; Thinking Fellers Union Local 242, playing their first New York show in two years. *416 W. 14th St. (229-0785).*

ez—Mingus fever and lush *faux*-Moroccan ambience make this the neo-boho place to be on Thursdays, when the mighty Mingus Big Band rocks the house, playing the works of the great, brawling jazz bassist with a freshness and authority rarely seen in jazz today. Hidden beneath the Time Cafe, Fez takes some ambition and assertiveness to access on a crowded night. Every Wednesday, Fez presents "Stella: An Evening of Big Room Comedy," featuring veterans of MTV's *The State* and other cutups. *Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (533-2680).*

Irving Plaza—A midsize bi-level rock venue with moody chandeliers and a sort of haunted-bordello look. It's a bit of a crush near the stage, but there's an amiable bar, 119, right around the corner for a preshow aperitif. "Savoy Sundays" are weekly swingfests of ballroom dancing. 11/11: Everclear. (Sold out.) 11/12: Christian grungeists Jars of Clay. 11/13–11/15: The Radiators. 11/18: Ratt. 11/19: Gus Gus; Cornershop. *17 Irving Pl. (777-6800).*

Knitting Factory—The Disneyland of downtown music, with three floors, two stages, two microbrew-bearing bars, and some of the biggest names in now music. 11/12: Nana Vasconsuelos; Cyro Baptista; Vinicius Cantuaria. 11/13: Mark Eitzel; Shannon Wright. 11/14: Peter Blegvad; John Zorn. 11/15: Apples in Stereo; Beulah. 11/16: Pansy Division; Tribe 8. 11/17: William Hooker & DJ Olive; Glen Spearman; Lee Ranaldo. 11/18: Bill Miller. *74 Leonard St., bet. Broadway and Church St. (219-3055).*

Life—Shortly after George Michael, wearing his trademark CHOOSE LIFE T-shirt, hit it big with Wham, a parody-garment hit the ever-wacky St. Marks Place kitsch stalls. Fast forward to the 1990s, when this ill-named Greenwich Village mini-megaclub makes the CHOOSE DEATH shirt's advice seem positively sensible: For denizens of Planet Supermodel, the V.I.P. area of the reimagined Village Gate may be a fine venue in which to conduct the business of stardom. But for those whose visits to Life don't qualify as "Page Six" news, the place's menacing bouncers, pushy Euro-clientele, and cattle-car atmosphere all add up to a night of humiliation, misery, and alienation. Choose death, indeed. *158 Bleecker St. (420-1999).*

Manny's Car Wash—A little Chicago on the Upper East Side. Mondays, beware salivating yuppie swells here for ladies' night. Every Sunday, it's Manny's World Famous Bluea jam. 11/12: Fingers Taylor & The Jumpn' Johnny Sansone Band. 11/13-11/14: Jimmy Thackery & The Drivers. 11/15: Mitch Woods & His Rocket 88's. *1558 Third Ave., bet. 87th and 88th Sts. (369-BLUE).*

Mercury Lounge—Once a headstone parlor, now one of the city's hippest and most congenial music spots, hosting rock and country artists groomed for the more au courant time slots of MTV. 11/11: High Llamas; Home. 11/12: Creed; Cellophane; Subrosa. 11/13: They Might Be Giants. 11/14–11/16: Moxy Fruvous. 11/18: Nancy Boy. *217 E. Houston St. (260-4700).*

Sidewalk Cafe—The back-room Fort is the latest home to New York's "anti-folk" scene, featuring impassioned, oft-wacky guitar- and poesy-wielding artists, with the occasional Beat refugee. 11/15: Homer Erotic; Rome 56; Idrees. 11/18: The Lee Feldman Band. *94 Ave. A (473-7373).*

Sounds of Brazil—The city's premier world-music venue, presenting many acts that could fill stadia back home. Most nights, sets at 10 and midnight. 11/10: Tony Vega. 11/11: Muta Baruka. 11/12: Rhythm & Jews. 11/13: Courtney Pine; Tab Two. 11/17: Celia Cruz. *204 Varick St. (243-4940).*

The Supper Club—A large, grand ballroom with a starry ceiling and challenging acoustics. Every Friday and Saturday, the Tony Corbiscello Big Band pays tribute to various big-band heroes of yesteryear, after which the next generation of swingers takes over, from midnight till 4 A.M. 11/10–11/12: Joe Jackson. 11/13: Lisa Stansfield. 11/14: Beat Positive. 11/15: Tony Corbiscello Big Band Tribute to Glenn Miller; The Flipped Fedoras. *240 W. 47th St. (921-1940).*

Tramps—One of the city's better venues for great roots music and happening indie rock, Tramps eschews high concept for straightforward presentation. Avoid the neck-craning mid-stage column by arriving early. 11/11: Prong; Sister Machine Gun. 11/12: Jonatha Brooke; David Poe. 11/13: *Women In Rock* publication party. Ruth Brown; Wanda Jackson; Ronnie Spector; Dar Williams. 11/14: Fabulous Thunderbirds; Robert Earl Keen; the Delevantes. 11/15: Milo Z. 11/16: Link Wray. 11/17: The Toadies; Tenderloin. 11/18: Toad the Wet Sprocket; Summercamp. *51 W. 21st St. (727-7788).*

Wetlands—A groovy club-kid activist hang with neo-hippie atmosphere and far-flung musical guests. N.B.: Tuesday night is (Grateful) Dead Night. Sunday is "Fastbreak," a jungle-techno-hip-hop-"Kung-fu-breakbeat" extravaganza. 11/12: R.L. Burnside; T-Model Ford. 11/13: Smokin' Grass; The Nields; Jump Little Chicken. 11/14: Fatbag; Brown; Future Freedom Ensemble. 11/15: The Why Store; Marry Me Jane; The Fountains. 11/16: Gilby Clarke; The Beat Angels. 11/17: Andy Summers. *161 Hudson St. (966-5244).*

Talent

Double-Barreled Beats

It's electronica you can mosh to: The Chemical Brothers get West 34th Street jumping with two nights of their patented techno-rock hybrid. Hammerstein Ballroom, November 14 and 15.

otograph by Richard Weedon.

Jazz

Birdland—A roomy bandstand overlooking a classy boîte as suggestive of Big Band–era elegance as the club's name. Every Monday night, the Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra. Every Friday the Lew Anderson Big Band swings from 5:30 to 7:30. 11/10-11/11: Makoto Ozone Trio. 11/12-11/16: Toots Thielemans. 11/17: Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra featuring Lew Tobackin. 11/18: Terell Stafford Quartet. *315 W. 44th St. (581-3080).*

Blue Note—With a first-rate sound system and a great view from every seat in the house (the standing-room area at the bar's not bad, either), the "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. Sets at 9 and 11:30 P.M. 11/11-11/16: Roberta Flack. 11/18-11/23: Max Roach & The So What Brass Ensemble. *131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592).*

Iridium—Merlot, the artfully wacky restaurant across from Lincoln Center, hosts some formidable jazz comers in its cozy basement, along with the occasional legend. Monday nights, the Les Paul Trio holds office hours. 11/11–11/16: Cyrus Chestnut Trio. Sets at 8:30 and 10:30, Sun.–Thurs., with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. *44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (582-2121).*

The Jazz Standard—Midtown south's newest, biggest, and happeningest hangout for hard-boppers and the men and women who love them. You can't hear the bands from the swanky first-floor restaurant (opening November 11), but the basement club's modified menu should more than suffice.

Ground Rules:

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. $ = cash only.

11/11-11/16: Grooving young pianist Jonny King heads up a quintet. Sets Sun., Tues.-Thurs. at 8 P.M. and 10 P.M., Fri. and Sat. at 8 P.M., 10:30 P.M., and midnight; $10-$15 cover on weekdays, $15-$20 cover on Fri. and Sat. *116 E. 27th St. (576-2232).*

Knickerbocker Bar & Grill—A wood-paneled and brass-railed restaurant with Old New York ambience and excellent—occasionally legendary—pianists. 11/12-11/15: Roger Kellaway and Gene Bertoncini. 11/17-11/18: Gene Lees, Phil Lees, David Finck, and Gene Bertoncini. *33 University Pl. (228-8490).*

Museum of Modern Art—Fridays, in addition to throwing its doors open for pay-what-you-wish night, MOMA also transforms its cafeteria into a (sort of) swinging jazz club. While no amount of imagination can render the institutional, linoleum-tile décor any more inviting than your average mass feed-trough, the concept *is* fairly happening. 11/14: Ben Allison and Medicine Wheel. *11 W. 53rd St. (708-0480).*

Red Blazer Too—Early Friday evening is the time to catch Lew Anderson's crack big band, before its members head off to their more lucrative gigs in Broadway's orchestra pits. *349 W. 46th St. (262-3112).*

Showman's Cafe—Harlem's subtly wonderful jazz club, where you can always get a table and the jukebox is one of the best in the city. Every Thursday, sixties organ great Reuben Wilson leads his heady trio. Sets at 10 P.M., midnight, and 2 A.M. No cover; two-drink minimum. *2321 Eighth Ave., bet. 124th and 125th Sts. (864-8941). $.*

Small's—Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post–Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. Every Sunday, the Jazz Composers Forum, followed by the Across Seventh Street Septet. Every Monday, Jason Lindner's youthful, Ellington-meets-Mingus big band. Wednesdays, it's the Sam Yahel Organ Quartet. 11/13: Tony Wilson Quartet. 11/14-11/15: Dan Falk Quintet. Shows start at 10 P.M. *183 W. 10th St. (929-7565). $.*

Sweet Basil—An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Saturday, jazz brunch with Ilhan Ersahin. Sundays, Chuck Folds hosts "the original jazz brunch." Every Monday, it's the Spirit of Life Ensemble. 11/11-11/16: Leon Parker Duo/Quartet. Sets at 9 and 11 P.M., with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. *88 Seventh Ave. So., at Bleecker St. (242-1785).*

Tavern on the Green—A somewhat overwrought restaurant in a touristy Central Park rest stop, the Tavern's Chestnut Room is still a top-flight jazz club—with excellent sound and a full roster of stars. 11/11-11/13: Sophia Laiti. 11/14-11/16: Martha Lorin. *Central Park at W. 67th St. (873-3200).*

Village Vanguard—Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smoky institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. Mondays, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. 11/11-11/16: Eric Reed Trio, with Reginald Veal and Kenny Washington. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30 P.M. *178 Seventh Ave. So., at W. 11th St. (255-4037). $.*

Zinc Bar—A tiny subterranean hideout, sheltered from bustling Houston Street by heavy red drapes. Weeknights, sets at 10 P.M., midnight, and 2 A.M.; weekends at 11 P.M., 12:30 and 2 A.M. Mondays, the Ron Affif Trio. Fridays: Raf Astor's flamenco band. Saturdays: Marianne Ebert's Brazilian-jazz quartet. *90 W. Houston St. (477-8337). $.*

Performance

Sassiest Girl in America

Ruth Brown's trademark admonition (ostensibly to an indecisive used-furniture buyer), "If I can't sell it, I'm gonna keep sitting on it," gives a fair idea of the kind of southern-fried attitude the R&B legend exudes full-time. Which will probably make this 69-year-old the most truly bumping performer at the November 13 publication party for *Trouble Girls: The Rolling Stone Women in Rock Book* at Tramps. (To be fair, her worthy colleagues for the night include punk-funk pioneers Bush Tetras, Ronnie Spector, Lucinda Williams, and Goldie and the Gingerbreads—the first all-female rock band to record for a major label, in 1965.) Too busy reading the book to make the show? No problem: Catch Brown on her own at Columbia University's Miller Theater, November 14.

Comedy

Boston Comedy Club—*Animal House* ambience and, most nights, comedy to match. Sundays: "All Star Comedy." Mondays: Open-mike night hosted by David J. Tuesday–Thursday, shows at 9:30 P.M. Fridays and Saturdays, the club promises "the country's top comedians," with shows at 8, 10, and midnight. Through 11/6: Greg Rogell, Greer Barnes, Rich Vos, Dave Attel, Greg Giraldo, Eric O'Shea, Tony Woods, DC Benny, and host Lewis Schaffer. *82 W. 3rd St. (477-1000).*

Carolines Comedy Club—In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show, Carolines hosts big names and talented up-and-comers in its wide, elegant, TV-studio-like basement. Mondays and Tuesdays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. 11/12: Phat Comedy Night with hosts Dr. Dre & Ed Lover. 11/13: the jones'. 11/14-11/16: Mario Joyner. 11/18: Justin Foran. *1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (757-4100). $12.50-$18.50, two-drink minimum.*

Catch a Rising Star—A high-class restaurant-bar-theater, Catch may look suspiciously *Cheers*-esque, but its talent is consistently top-flight. Wednesday night's "This Is Not a Test" broadcasts live on the Web. Ill-advised as it sounds, this marriage of high-tech and high jinks is novel, fresh, and entertaining—thanks in large degree to its ratio of cost (free) to talent (Janeane Garafolo, Conan O'Brien, Jon Stewart). Friday's "The Big Bad Music Show" explores that riskiest of all entertainment territory, humor-rock. Shows Tues. at 8:30 P.M.; Wed. and Thurs. at 9 P.M.; Fri. and Sat. at 9 and 11 P.M. *253 W. 28th St., (244-3005).*

Comedy Cellar—A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. 11/9-11/16: Colin Quinn; Greg Giraldo; Al Lubel; Greer Barnes; Tom Cotter; Rick Crom. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11 P.M.; Sat. at 9 P.M., 10:45 P.M., and 12:30 A.M.; and Sun–Thurs. at 9 P.M. *117 MacDougal St. (254-3480).*

Comic Strip—Probably the most expertly booked club in the city, this showcase offers an eclectic mix of comedians every night of the week. *1568 Second Ave., bet. 81st and 82nd Sts. (861-9386).*

Dangerfield's—Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. 11/10-11/16: Gregory Carey; Jim Norton; quentin Heggs. Fri. at 9 and 11:15 P.M.; Sat. at 8 P.M., 10:30 P.M., and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.–Thurs., continuous from 8:45 P.M. Cover is $15 Fri. and Sat.; $12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. *1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (593-1650).*

Gotham—An elegant, trendy, and palatial comedy spot in the Flatiron district. 11/14-11/15: Mitch Fatel, Quentin Heggs, Jeff Ross. Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30 P.M.; Fri. and Sat. at 9 and 11:30 P.M. Cover is $12 Fri. and Sat., $8 on weeknights. Two-drink minimum. *34 West 22nd St. (367-9000).*

New York Comedy Club—Every Friday, the NYCC presents "New York's Best African-American and Latino Comics." Every Wed. and Thurs., there's sketch comedy at 7 P.M. Shows Mon.–Fri. at 9, with extra shows Fri. at 7 and 11 P.M.; Sat. at 6, 7:30, 9:30, and 11:45 P.M. *241 E. 24th St. (696-5233).*

Stand-up New York—Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his *Letterman* appearances. Shows: Sun.–Thurs. at 7; Fri.–Sat. at 7, 9, and 11:30 P.M. 11/14-11/15: Susie Essman; Brian McFadden. 11/21-11/22: Eddie Brill; Gregg Fitzsimmons; Dave Attell. *236 W. 78th St. (595-0850). $7-$12.*

Cabaret

Algonquin Hotel—Not many round tables (and no viciousness) in the Oak Room—just a classy performance space so intimate you can reach out and touch the performers. Through 11/15: Mary Cleere Haran's "Pennies From Heaven: Movie Songs of the 1930s." Tues.–Sat. at 9 (dinner at 7), Fri.–Sat. also at 11:30 (supper at 10:30). $35; $15 minimum. *59 W. 44th St. (840-6800, ext. 154).*

Asti—Singing-waiter frolics, with an emphasis on opera and operetta, are the keynote of this Village landmark. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105).*

Cafe Carlyle—In keeping with his annual tradition Bobby Short is in the house for his delightful fal run. On Monday, Short's dark night, Woody Allen swings on with Eddy Davis & His New Orlean Jazz Band. Tues.–Sat. at 8:45 and 10:45 P.M. $50 no minimum. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600).*

Eighty-Eight's—A West Village venue whose unassuming façade conceals a top-notch little theate within. Fridays through 11/28, singer-pianis Rohn Seykell sings. $15, with a two-drink minimum. *228 W. 10th St. (924-0088).*

Rainbow and Stars—Romance, prewar charm, and wood paneling, hundreds of feet above midtown Through 11/15: David Campbell. $40 cover Tues.–Sat. at 8:30 P.M.; Fri. and Sat. at 11 P.M.; seating for dinner is at 6:30 P.M. *30 Rockefeller Plaza 65th floor (632-5000).*

Bars

The View Lounge—What can you say about a rotatin bar hundreds of feet above Times Square? In spit of—or because of—its utterly impersonal ambi ence, it's a classic, and well worth the exorbitantl high prices. One of the rare venues where motio sickness may set in before you catch a cab home *Marriott Marquis, 1535 Broadway, at 45th St., forty eighth floor (398-1900).*

Photograph by Shonna Valesk

in concert

The National Symphony Orchestra Performs Child-Themed Works

Classical Music

Monday, November 10

ienjamin Schmid, Violin, and Alfons Kontarsky, Piano—Perform various works by Johannes Brahms. *Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 8; free.*

oul of Ashkenaz—A concert of pre-Holocaust German-Jewish music, featuring cantorial and choral works by Louis Lewandowski, Emanuel Kirschner, Leon Kornitzer, and others. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (875-5000), at 8; $20–$25.*

Tuesday, November 11

uilliard Symphony—Performs works by Smetana, Sibelius, and Brahms, with Karen Johnston, violin. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (875-7000), at 7:30; $15.*

hiladelphia Orchestra—Performs Mahler's Symphony No. 2; Sir Simon Rattle, conductor. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $18–$70.*

Wednesday, November 12

amuel Bartos, Piano—Performs J. S. Bach's *Goldberg Variations. Miller Theater at Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. (854-7799), at 8; $15.*

uijken Trio—Performs Leclair, Marais, Couperin, and Rameau. *Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $30.*

etherlands Chamber Choir—Performs Bach, Rheinberger, Mendelssohn, and others. *Saint Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 50th St. (378-0248), at 7:30; $10–$30.*

rometheus Chamber Orchestra—Performs Ravel, Mozart, Haydn, and Berlioz, with Debra Every, mezzo-soprano, and Wilson Hermanto, conductor. *Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3378), at 8; $15.*

ıkyo String Quartet—Performs Beethoven, Shostakovich, and Tchaikovsky, with Toby Hoffman, violin, and Gary Hoffman, cello. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (875-5000), at 8; $32.*

Thursday, November 13

argemusic—Trio performances of Haydn, Beethoven, and Brahms. *Fulton Ferry Landing, under the Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn (718-624-4061), at 7:30; $23.*

ırnegie Hall Jazz Band—Performs works by Leonard Bernstein, with performances by Dave Grusin, Gloria Estefan, and Jonathan Butler. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $18–$55.*

ıamber Music Society—Performs Schubert's Piano Trio No. 2 in E-flat minor. Hilary Hahn, violin; Reiko Uchida, piano; and Gary Hoffman, cello. *Rose Studio, tenth floor of the Rose Building, Lincoln Center (875-5000), at 6:45; $15*

›w York Philharmonic—Performs Messiaen and Berlioz; Myung-Whun Chung, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (875-7000), at 7:30; $20–$75.*

usicians from Marlboro—Perform Mozart and Webern string quartets. *Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (570-3949), at 8; $25.*

Friday, November 14

National Symphony Orchestra—Performs Debussy's *Children's Corner Suite,* Dohnanyi's *Variations on a Nursery Song,* and Corigliano's *Pied Piper Fantasy. Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $17–$65.*

Nathalie Stutzmann, Contralto—Performs with Inger Södergren, piano. *Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $30.*

New York Philharmonic—See 11/13.

Saturday, November 15

National Symphony Orchestra—Performs Carpenter's *Adventures in a Perambulator* and Pierne's *The Children's Crusade,* with Heidi Grant Murphy, soprano; Leonard Slatkin, conductor. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $16–$60.*

DROP—A psychedelic rock opera by Puak Mascotta and Hank Wagner. *NADA's House of Candles, 99 Stanton St. (420-1466), midnight; free.*

New York Philharmonic—See 11/13, at 7:30.

Sunday, November 16

Antara Ensemble—Performs Mozart, Saint-Saëns, Tchaikovsky, and others; flutist Harold Jones, director. *Saint Peter's Lutheran Church, 619 Lexington Ave., at 54th St. (866-2545), at 2; $12.*

Chamber Music Society—Performs Beethoven and Schubert works for strings. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (875-5000), at 5; $25–$35.*

Catherine Malfitano, Soprano—Performs songs by Rodrigo, Weill, Barber, and others, with Robert Tweten, piano. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (875-5000), at 2; $35.*

Sarah Chang, Violin—Performs Mozart, Strauss, Prokofiev, and Chopin, with Charles Abramovic, piano. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 2; $15–$45.*

Bargemusic—See 11/13, at 4:30.

Opera

Metropolitan Opera—Performs Mozart's *Don Giovanni,* 11/11, 11/14, and 11/17 at 8; Wagner's *Tannhauser,* 11/8 at 12:30; and Rossini's *La Cenerentola,* 11/12 at 7:30; Puccini's *Turandot,* 11/15 at 1:30. *Metropolitan Opera House, Lincoln Center (362-6000); $24–$200.*

Time Rocker—Performances of this new Robert Wilson–Lou Reed pop opera begin 11/12, running 11/14–11/15 at 7:30 and 11/16 at 3. *BAM Opera House, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (307-4100), at 8; $18–$75.*

Ground Rules:

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public square/park performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, outdoors or in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

New York City Opera—Performs Handel's *Xerxes,* 11/13 at 7:30 and 11/16 at 1:30; Donizetti's *Don Pasquale,* 11/14 at 8; Tan Dun's *Marco Polo,* 11/15 at 1:30; Puccini's *La Bohème,* 11/15 at 8. *New York State Theater, 20 Lincoln Center (870-5570); $20–$85.*

Amato Opera—The world's smallest opera house performs Verdi's *Aïda;* Anthony Amato, conductor. 11/15 at 7:30 and 11/16 at 2:30. *319 Bowery (228-8200); $20.*

Dance

American Ballet Theater—Performs 11/11–11/16 at 8, 11/15 and 11/16 at 2. *City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212); $30–$55.*

Forever Tango—The Argentine form interpreted by Luis Bravo. *Walter Kerr Theater, 218 W. 48th St. (239-6200); $30–$65.*

Limón Dance Company—Performs José Limón's *Missa Brevis* and *The Winged,* 11/13–11/15 at 8; 11/16 at 3. *The Nave at Riverside Church, 490 Riverside Drive, at 120th St. (870-6784); $20.*

Previews

Knight Hawk

In Wagner's 'Tannhäuser,' knight Wolfram—played by baritone Bryn Terfel—loses (read: kills) his soul mate, Elizabeth, because he can't seem to trade the sinful pleasures of the city for her love. Funny how some things never change. Metropolitan Opera House, November 13.

otograph by Winnie Klotz.

the mix

Seconding the First...Best American Belles Lettres

John Leonard's TV Notes

Mad About You—(11/11; 8 to 8:30 P.M.; NBC) begins with Jamie's postpartum depression ("His daughter actually sucks on me . . . I'll stab out his eyes with a shrimp fork") and ends with a senior-citizen production of *The Pirates of Penzance* from which Paul is unlikely ever to recover, not even with the help of Ben & Jerry's ice cream and not to mention the Little Sisters of the Blind.

Just Shoot Me—(11/11; 9:30 to 10 P.M.; NBC) begins in the office of *Blush* magazine with several semi-witty nipple jokes ("There's Waldo!") and ends with a send-up of Shakespeare's *King Lear* that's almost as funny as the movie version of Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres*. Still, I could listen forever to Laura San Giacomo's voice, even when she quotes Cordelia.

Law & Order—(11/12; 10 to 11 P.M.; NBC) begins an investigation by Briscoe and Curtis into the death of a 14-year-old fashion model that will end Friday night on *Homicide* with Munch and Falsone in Baltimore, where the victim's family seems not to be telling even a particle of the truth. This is series television as good as it gets.

The Sculptress—(11/13 and 20; 9 to 10:30 P.M.; Channel 13) improves considerably on the recent sorry record of public television's *Mystery!* series, with Caroline Goodall as a true-crime-book writer looking into the case of compulsive liar Pauline Quirke, who has been convicted of butchering her mother and sister even though she may also have been sleeping with her father's male lover who's own wife is probably crazy, not to mention lawyers and mobsters out to seize a parcel of land on which there's a restaurant that happens to be owned by the ex-cop (Christopher Fulford) who discovered the butchered bodies in the first place.

Face Down—(11/15; 9 to 11 P.M.; TMC) is more crepuscular *noir,* written and directed by Thomas Eberhardt (*Gross Anatomy, Night of the Comet*), with Joe Mantegna as a guilt-ridden ex-cop private eye, Peter Riegert as the police lieutenant who hates him, and Kelli Maroney as the manic-depressive who may or may not have shot the loan shark who may or may not have bailed out the art dealer (Adam Ant) who may or may not have been fiddling with the pills in Kelli's bottle of putative lithium. There will be, of course, a jazz sax and a surprise twist.

Oliver Twist—(11/16; 7 to 9 P.M.; ABC) is a songless Disney version of the usual Dickens with a sly Richard Dreyfuss as a semi-sympathetic Fagin, plus Elijah Wood as the Artful Dodger, Alex Trench as orphan Oliver, David O'Hara as Bill Sikes, and Antoine Byrne as Nancy, who is, as always, very nice, but I still miss Georgia Brown. London Bridge is seedier than I'd expect from the Magic Kingdom, which means they're at least trying.

Radio Highlights

New York & Company—Weekdays at noon. 11/11: Seymour Hersh on *The Dark Side of Camelot;* Kevork Ajemian discusses his book *A Time for Terror;* Actress Sondra Locke on *The Good, the Bad, and the Very Ugly.* 11/12: Carlos Fuentes talks about his novels *The Crystal Frontier* and *The Old Gringo;* Word man Dr. Alan Cooper gives us the prognosis on the English language. 11/13: *National Review* editor Richard Brookhiser casts a conservative eye; Allan Gurganus on his novel *Plays Well With Others;* Robert Drew and Albert Maysles discuss the Film Forum's "60s Verité" series; Frances O'Connor, Matt Day, and director Bill Bennett discuss their Australian *noir* film *Kiss or Kill.* 11/14: "Gurus of How-To" Al and Larry Ubell talk home repair; Ernest Sternglass on *Before the Big Bang: The Origins of the Universe.* 11/17: Jan Morris reviews *Fifty Years of Europe;* Peter Gadol on his novel *The Long Rain.* 11/18: Gregory Jaynes and his rather sudden memoir, *Come Hell on High High Water;* Mark de Villiers and Sheila Hirtle shar their book *Into Africa: A Journey Through the Ancien Empires.* 11/19: Carl Hiassen and his novel, *Luck You;* Jamaica Kincaid talks about her memoir, *M Brother.* 11/20: Miles Barth looks into *Weegee World.* Leonard Lopate hosts. WNYC, 820 AM.

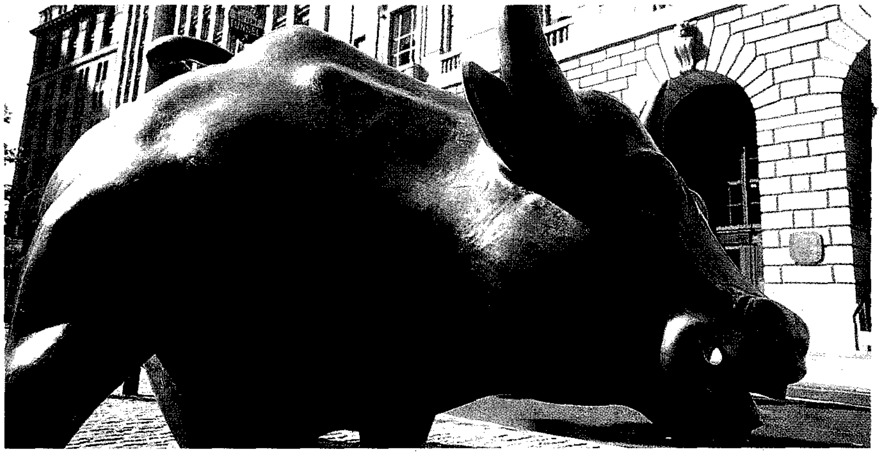
Casper Citron—11/15 at 10 P.M.: Cornell's Dr. Antonio Gotto discusses his book on heart disease *Th New Living Heart;* Louis Auchincloss examines th moral life of America's moneyed class in a conversation about his new book, *The Atonement;* M.I. research scientist Felice Frankel discusses her bool of photographs *On the Surfaces of Things;* Pete Masters, an elite British commando durin WWII, talks about *Striking Back: A Jewish Commando's War Against the Nazis.* WOR, 710 AM.

The Lewis Burke Frumkes Show—11/16 at 8 P.M.: Judith Rossner on *Perfidia.* WNWK, 105.9 FM.

The Written Word

Judith Rossner—11/11 at 6:30 P.M.: Reading fror her new book, *Perfidia.* The Salon at Benetton's Caffè, 597 Fifth Avenue, at 48th St. (593-0290).

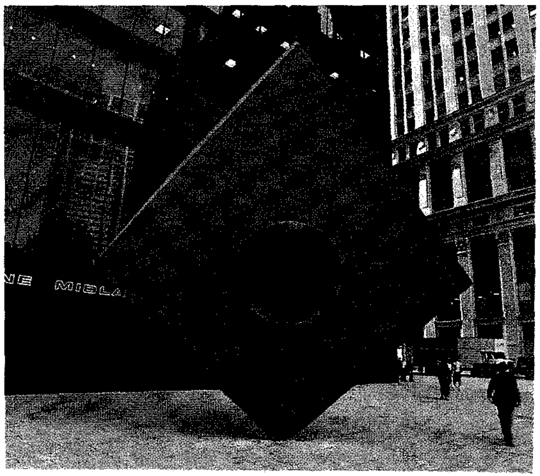
James McBride & Kwadwo Agymah Kamau—11/11 at P.M.: James McBride reads from his memoir, *Th Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to his Whi Mother;* Kwadwo Agymah Kamau shares excerp



Happening

Public Offering

The long, uneasy relationship between art and commerce is the subject of "Art and the Deal," Cooper Union's November 15 tour of the Stock Exchange and lower Manhattan (taking in sculpture along the Battery Park Esplanade, for example, and in Louise Nevelson Plaza). Other upcoming tours offered by the reliably excellent Cooper Union: a visit to the new studios and galleries in West Chelsea, and a glimpse of Manhattan's private social clubs (including the University, the Metropolitan, and the Colony). Call 353-4198 for details.



from his debut novel, *Flickering Shadows.* KGB, 85 E. 4th St. (505-3360).

imi Sheraton—11/12 at 7 P.M.: Meet the food critic and author of *The Whole World Loves Chicken Soup* for a discussion and tasting in connection with another of her efforts, *The German Cookbook.* Barnes & Noble, 1972 Broadway, at 66th St. (595-6859).

lan Gurganus—11/13 at 7 P.M.: The author of the *Oldest Confederate Widow Tells All* reads from his new novel, *Plays Well With Others.* Tishman Auditorium, the New School, 66 W. 12th St. (229-5488); $5.

Killer Queer Fiction"—11/16 at 7 P.M.: *Three Hots and a Cot* presents an evening reading with four fiction writers, featuring Canaan Parker, J. M. Baezer, Tim Driscoll, and David Pratt. Cornelia St. Café, 29 Cornelia St. (989-9318); $5.

nathan Galassi & Rika Lesser—11/17 at 7:30 P.M.: The writers share billing at KGB, 85 E. 4th St. (505-3360).

asswords: John Felstiner on Paul Celan—11/18 at 7 P.M.: The biographer and award-winning literary critic reads and examines the works of poet Paul Celan. Poets House, 72 Spring St., between Broadway and Lafayette (431-7920); $7.

est American Mystery Stories 1997—11/19 at 7:30 P.M.: A night of suspense and intrigue with Joyce Carol Oates, Michael Malone, S. J. Rozan, and Otto Penzler, all of whom will read from the new anthology. Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd St. (362-8835).

Lectures and Panels

lling the Plug: Bioethical Dilemmas Around Dying—11/11 at 8:30 P.M.: Dr. Nancy Neveloff Dubler, author of *Ethics on Call,* and Rabbi Harlan Wechsler, author of *What's So Bad About Guilt,* share the podium at the second lecture of the six-part series "Technology: Blessing or Curse?" Call to register. The Jewish Theological Seminary, 3080 Broadway, at 122nd St. (678-8996); $15.

arles Geisst—11/14 at 1: The author of *Wall Street: A History* will discuss his book at the Strand Book Annex, 95 Fulton St., near William St. (732-6070); free.

king Back American Towns & Cities—11/12 at 6 P.M.: A reception and tour of the landmark church followed by Richard Moe's lecture on his new book, *Changing Places: Rebuilding Community in the Age of Sprawl,* which demonstrates how preservation can revitalize neighborhoods. Proceeds to benefit Landmarks Conservancy. The Church of St. Vincent Ferrer, 869 Lexington Ave., at 66th St. (995-5260); $25.

uthern Exposure With Alfred Uhry & Eli Evans—11/12 at 7 P.M.: A literary forum with the award-winning playwright and the celebrated author to reflect on the Jewish experience in the South, sponsored by *The Jewish Week.* Call for reservations. Park East Synagogue, 164 E. 68th St. (843-9239); free.

***el Pieces* With Ron Howard**—11/12 at 7:15 P.M.: Dr. Annette Insdorf welcomes the popular child actor turned director (*Splash, Parenthood, Cocoon, Backdraft, Apollo 13, Ransom*) to discuss his craft and career. This is the second installment in a five-part film and lecture series. 92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $18.

on Ton Lust—11/13 at 6:30 P.M.: Join authors John and Mel Krich on their global quest for the ultimate Chinese meal. Part travelogue, part restaurant guide, their book looks at Chinese culture and politics through cuisine. Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., at 70th St. (517-ASIA); free.

chanical Marvels—11/14 at 6 P.M.: Vassar College's Nicholas Adams lectures on Francesco Di Giorgio's *Art of War.* NYU's Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò, 24 W. 12th St. (998-8739); free.

***t at Work*: The Documentary PBS Would Not Air**—11/15 at 10 A.M.: A screening of Tami Gold and Kelly Anderson's film, followed by a symposium focusing on gay rights, worker identity, and media access for controversial subjects. Call to register. NYU's Cantor Film Center, 36 E. 8th St. (633-6700); free.

Palestine: Urban Space, Division & Citizenship—11/17 at 6:30 P.M.: A discussion with Israeli journalist and sociologist Meron Benvenisti and Palestinian sociologist Salim Tamari about how the space of Jerusalem has been and might be shared. NYU Law School's Greenberg Lounge, 40 Washington Square South (998-3770); free.

Resolving the Environmental Crisis: How Helpful Is Technology?—11/18 at 8:30 P.M.: Dr. David Orr, author of *Ecological Literacy* and *Earth in Mind,* joins Mark Sagoff, author of *The Economy of the Earth: Philosophy, Law and the Environment,* when they deliver the third lecture of the six-part series "Technology: Blessing or Curse?" Call to register. The Jewish Theological Seminary, 3080 Broadway, at 122nd St. (678-8996); $15.

The Greatest Opera Never Written—11/18 at 6 P.M.: Gary Schmidgall, author of *Literature As Opera* and *Shakespeare and Opera,* lectures on "Verdi's *Re Lear* Project." NYU's Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò, 24 W. 12th St. (998-8739); free.

The Ideal House—11/18 & 11/19 at 6:30 P.M.: Art and architectural historian Evie T. Joselow presents this two-part lecture and slide presentation examining the impact of pattern-book and mail-order homes, two uniquely American phenomena. *Pre-fab, man!* Cooper Union's Wollman Auditorium, 51 Astor Pl. (353-4100); $25 for both lectures, $15 for single lecture.

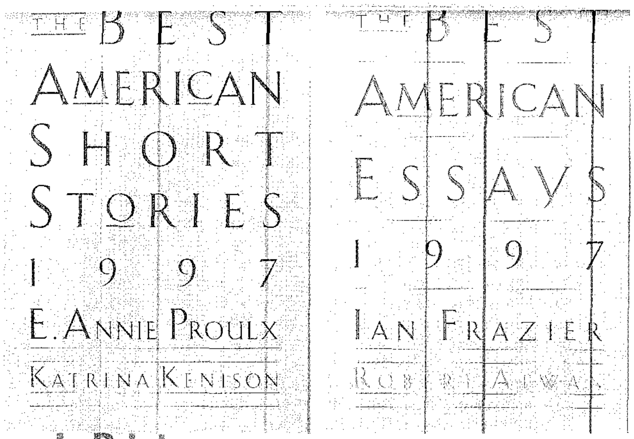
***Reel Pieces* With Harry Belafonte**—11/19 at 7:15 P.M.: A discussion with the singer and actor will be accompanied by a screening of *Angel Levine* (Jan Kadar, 1970), starring Belafonte and Zero Mostel. Film-and-lecture series hosted by Dr. Annette Insdorf. 92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $18.

Tours

New York in War & Peace—11/11 at 1 P.M.: A special Veterans' Day walk through lower Manhattan to visit some of the city's notable battlefields, war monuments, and sites of antiwar protests, as well as the haunts of generals, Confederate spies, peacemakers, and military inventors. Meet on the front steps of City Hall (439-1090); $9.

Proud of Place: The Upper West Side—11/14 at 12:30 P.M.: Municipal Art Society's Matthew Postal traces the development of this neighborhood. From Verdi Square to the Museum of Natural History, discover the neighborhood's often-neglected clubs, museums, and places of worship. Meet at the northeast corner of 72nd St. and Amsterdam Ave. (935-3960); $10.

The Gentry Across the Bridge—11/15 at 1 P.M.: Visit the promenade, personalities, and patrician architecture of beautiful Brooklyn Heights, the nineteenth-century suburb. Take the 2, 3, 4, or 5 train one stop into Brooklyn and meet at the corner of Orange and Henry Sts. (242-5762); $12.


THE BEST AMERICAN SHORT STORIES 1997
E. ANNIE PROULX
KATRINA KENISON
THE BEST AMERICAN ESSAYS 1997
IAN FRAZIER
ROBERT ATWAN

In Print

Best Revenge

The stories are culled from such publications as *Santa Monica Review* and *Prism International.* The essays carry titles like "On Burying Dad" and "Praying for a Home: Some Thoughts on Writing and God." They are "distinguished" fiction and "notable" nonfiction, but, in the judgment of *The Best American Short Stories 1997* and *The Best American Essays 1997,* they are only the also-rans. Listed in the back of the annual collections—presumably as a kind of consolation prize—the runners-up are nonetheless infinitely soothing to anyone inclined to brood over the fact that the most pressing literary news appears now in the business section: No less poignantly than the winners, they announce that someone is writing (persistently, competently, singularly), someone is publishing (no matter how low the pay), and someone is reading (at the very least, Robert Atwan and Katrina Kenison, the series' attentive editors). This quiet, defiant activity is no small thing. A further pleasure of these books derives from the fascination of watching a heavyweight author as guest editor—the person who makes the final selections from a field of at least a hundred nominees. "The stories I've chosen tell you more about me than I could ever tell you about them," notes John Edgar Wideman, who edited last year's anthology. Whatever good things this year's crop says about its editor, E. Annie Proulx, she all but nullifies in an alternately pedestrian and nutty introduction. Her writing here reads like that of an honor student deaf to all literary music. "Many short stories deal with *Rites of Passage* [her italics] and are perhaps as ancient as human experience," she observes. "Perhaps the most common bin through which North American short story writers rummage for subject matter is one we might call *Perceived Social Values.*" Regrettably, Proulx does call it that, using the dreary rubric to classify a number of unsuspecting stories. Fans of Robert Stone, T. Coraghessan Boyle, Donald Hall, and Tobias Wolff, all represented in the book, will proceed anyhow. In *The Best American Essays,* meanwhile, editor Ian Frazier does not embarrass himself with either his choices—Richard Ford, Roy Blount Jr., Susan Sontag, Cynthia Ozick—or his introduction, which makes the obligatory reference to Montaigne only in order to point out that it does not, much to his and my surprise, rhyme with *champagne.* (Houghton Mifflin.) **LINDA HALL**

The Sutton Place You Never Knew—11/15 and 11/16 at 12:30 P.M.: From industrial wasteland to a haven for the well-to-do. Explore the East Sixties Treadwell Farm district, and journey past the homes of Eleanor Roosevelt, Tallulah Bankhead, and Gypsy Rose Lee. Call for reservations and meeting place (465-3331); $12.

Love, New York Style—11/15 and 11/16 at 12:30 P.M.: Journey by and learn of the tumultuous affairs and true love stories involving some of Gotham's most rich and famous, including Eleanor Roosevelt, John Barrymore, and writer John Reed. Call for information (629-1886); $10.

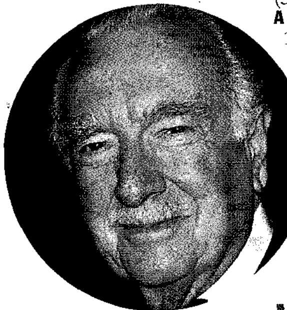
Chinatown—11/16 at 1 P.M.: Explore the Lower East Side's diverse Asian community and the largest Chinatown in the Western Hemisphere. Stops include Quong Yeun Shing (oldest store in Chinatown), the Kimlau Memorial, and the Museum of the Chinese Americans. Meet at the southwest corner of Canal and Lafayette Sts. (439-1090); $9.

Metropolitan Opera Backstage—Weekdays from 10 A.M to 4 P.M.: A unique, behind-the-scenes view of the creation of the opera. Includes costume and set design, the performers' rehearsal facilities and dressing rooms, and the opulent auditorium. At Lincoln Center; call for reservations and times (769-7020); $8.

Exhibitions

Mechanical Marvels: Invention in the Age of Leonardo—Through 3/1/98: This exhibit brings the "Renaissance of the Machine" that swept Europe in the fifteenth century back to life with large-scale silkscreen reproductions of original drawings, 50 remarkable working models, and a number of multimedia and virtual-reality stations. The show concentrates on the inventions of Filippo Brunelleschi, Taccola, Francesco di Giorgio, and Leonardo da Vinci. On view at the Liberty Street gallery at the World Financial Center. Tues.–Fri. 11 A.M.–6 P.M., Sat. and Sun. noon–5 P.M. (945-0505); $6.

Ambush in the Streets—Through 12/6: A collection of Jules Backus's photographs concentrating on *pochoirs.* Paris's constantly changing works of stencil and site-specific wall art range from whimsically indulgent to wickedly political. It is on view at Cooper Union's Herb Lubalin Study Center for Design and Typography, in the Historic Foundation Building, 7th St. and Third Ave. (353-4214).



A Community Oasis—Through 11/16: "Sixty Years in the Conservatory Garden." Through photographs and Garden memorabilia, this exhibition celebrates the beauty of this botanical treasure and its importance to the surrounding communities. It is on view at the Charles A. Dana Discovery Center, in Central Park at 110th St. near Fifth Ave. (860-1370); free.

Events

The Artists' Masked Ball—11/14 at 7 P.M.: The School of Visual Arts commemorates half a century of arts education with a gala masquerade ball featuring music from the Uptown Horns and Illinois Jacquet's Big Band. Alec Baldwin, Harrison Ford, Leo Castelli, Milton Glaser, Mary Miss, and 75 other VIPs who serve on the 50th Anniversary Committee will also be in attendance. Dress is semi-formal or formal and mask is required. Call for tickets. Lexington Armory, 68 Lexington Ave., at 26th St. (592-2302); $75.

St. John the Divine Choir Festival—11/15 at 4 P.M.: More than 30 choirs from throughout the Episcopal Diocese of New York join to perform at the Diocesan Choir Festival. The 460 choral singers will be conducted by Richard Westenburg, one of the country's most honored choral directors. 112th St. and Amsterdam Ave. (316-7540); free.

Seconding the First—11/17 at 8 P.M.: A gala celebration of the First Amendment and an in-depth exploration of trespasses on our right to free speech. Through readings, songs, multimedia, and staged presentations, the evening will focus on informational and artistic media that have been censored, contested, challenged or compromised. Written by Peter Stone and directed by Martin Charnin, this star-lit night features Paul Newman, Christopher Reeve, Robin Williams, Joanne Woodward, Kevin Kline, Nora Ephron, Joan Rivers, Sarah Jessica Parker, Alec and William Baldwin, Walter Cronkite, Phoebe Cates, Harvey Fierstein, Phil Donahue, Griffin Dunne, Marsha Mason, Marlo Thomas, Mike Nichols, Phoebe Snow, Judy Blume, Peggy Charren, Ron Howard, Blair Brown, and many more. Call for tickets. Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (840-2824); $25.

The Brick Church Fair—11/17 from 4 to 8 P.M., 11/18 from 10 A.M. to 8 P.M., and 11/19 from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.: The 54th Annual Brick Church Fair provides three days of unique holiday shopping and gift ideas including stationery, linens, jewelry, hand-knit clothing, homemade baked goods, preserves, and unique crafts. All proceeds to benefit neighborhood youth and elderly support groups. The Brick Church, 62 E. 92nd St. (289-4400).

California Wine Tasting—11/19 at 6:30 P.M.: Lauber Imports' wine expert Bill Sciambi introduces reds and whites from Napa Valley's finest vineyards. Sample vintages from the Long, Flora Springs, Mont St. John, Voss, and Raymond Estate wineries and receive a complimentary ticket to view the "Robert Rauschenberg: A Retrospective" exhibit. Call for reservations. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave, at 89th St. (423-3587); $30.

Benefits

Society of Publication Designers Second Annual Auction—11/11: Silent auction from 5:30 to 7:30 P.M.; Live Auction at 8 P.M. Collection includes more than 150 works by photographers and illustrators like William Abranowicz, Andrew Eccles, Raymond Meeks, Joyce Tenneson, Firooz Zahedi, Milton Glaser, Sante D'Orazio, Michael Myers, Troy Ward, Stephen Savage, Maurice Vellekoop, Noel Sutherland, and more. All proceeds to support the Scholarship Programs of the Society c Publication Designers. The Art Directors Clu 250 Park Ave., at 20th St. (983-8585); $5.

Sports

Football—You know what this season's Jets and Gi ants remind us of? Soufflé. They get hot, they ris but watching them you can't help worrying th it's all too delicate to stay up for long. Maybe ou nervousness stems from the fact that both team keep stirring quarterbacks into the mix. Two first place teams with QB controversies seems mor like a recipe for disaster than like a durable delica cy. **GIANTS:** 11/16: vs. Arizona at 1 P.M. (FOX). **JET** 11/16: at Chicago at 4 P.M (NBC).

Hockey—The Devils take on the resurgent Islande and the woeful Rangers this week in a kind of tri state round robin. Things to look for: Gretzk breaking his power-play point drought; the Isl playing superbly one night and atrociously th next; and the Devils dominating both team **RANGERS:** 11/12: vs. New Jersey at 7:30 P.M (MSG 11/14: vs. Pittsburgh at 7:30 P.M (MSG); 11/16: v Colorado at 1:30 P.M (MSG). **ISLANDERS:** 11/10: v New Jersey at 7:30 P.M (SC); 11/12: at Florida 7:30 P.M (SC); 11/14: at Tampa Bay at 7:30 P. (SC2); 11/15: vs. Florida at 7 P.M (SC2). **DEVIL** 11/10: at Islanders at 7:30 P.M (SC); 11/12: Rangers at 7:30 P.M (MSG); 11/14: vs. Colorad at 7:30 P.M (SC); 11/15: at Buffalo at 7:35 P.M.

Basketball—**KNICKS:** Championship teams ignore th advice of moms and priests and are generous to n one. We bring this up because the Knicks fac three patsies in five days, and the worst thing the can do is get all Mother Teresa on the guttersnip of the NBA. 11/11: vs. Denver at 7:30 P.M (MSG 11/12: at Toronto (TBS) at 8 P.M; 11/15: vs. Sacr mento at 7:30 P.M (MSG). **NETS:** The Nets will spending the weekend traveling from Detroit Cleveland, which sounds to us like Tim Alle honeymoon itinerary. But the snap tour of d pressing industrial burgs ends when the Ne come home to Jersey. Oh, wait . . . 11/13: v Cleveland at 7:30 P.M (SC); 11/15: at Detroit 7:30 P.M (SC); 11/16: at Cleveland at 6 P.M (SC)

Cross Country Championships—10/16: The name m be daunting, but the nation's original age-grou championship is open to everyone. The cour runs through the woodsy confines of Van Cor landt Park in the Bronx. Register individually in teams. Races begin at 10 A.M. Fee ranges fro $5 to $10. Call 860-4455 for information.

Eighth Annual Celebrity Sports Auction—10/13 at 6: P.M.: To benefit the Starlight Children's Found tion. Joe Torre, Rod Gilbert, Amani Toomer, a other New York sports stars past and present w be on hand to oversee a silent auction of goodi like an autographed Muhammad Ali portrait a the *ne plus ultra* of sports-fan desirables: tickets the *Sports Illustrated* 1998 Swimsuit Party. 200 Fif Club. $85 in advance, $100 at the door. For info mation and address, call 354-2878.

Online

Charge It—Officially launching November 1 Charged, the Website of "Action Sports and E treme Leisure," delivers thrilling features—fro building your own catapult to surfing Costa R ca—all wrapped up in sporty, pleasantly fram packaging complete with racing stripes and ene getic colors. In addition to valuable biking, su ing, skating, and snowboarding reviews, h columnists weave witty Web adventures, som how infusing thrift-store shopping and biki through Borneo with equal amounts of actio packed intensity. *www.charged.com*

***New York* Magazine on the Web**—Once again, plea allow us a moment of shameless self-promotio *New York* Magazine has a Website (the successor our late, lamented CompuServe site), featuri highlights from the current issue, much of t "CUE" section (with expanded listings) in searc able form, plenty of Web-only exclusives, and, they say, much, much more. So surf us alrea *www.nymag.com*

Happening **Celebrating the First Amendment is really as simple as handing a child a copy of *James and the Giant Peach* or *My Brother Sam Is Dead* (both of which are on the list of the most frequently banned books of the nineties). But why stop there? Head to the Creative Coalition's "Seconding the First" at Town Hall on November 17, where dozens of performers—ranging from Joanne Woodward and Paul Newman to Charles Busch to Alec and Billy Baldwin—will use multimedia and stage presentations to highlight material that has been "censored, contested, challenged, or compromised." Sample act: Robin Williams delivers a Lenny Bruce monologue. (See listings.)**

Photographs: top, Steve Azzara/Sygma; center, Gregory Pace/Sygma; bottom, Gerardo Somoza/Outli

kids

Cowgirls...Miss Spider...Hercules

Ground Rules:

● = free

● = now or never (one-shot deal or final week)

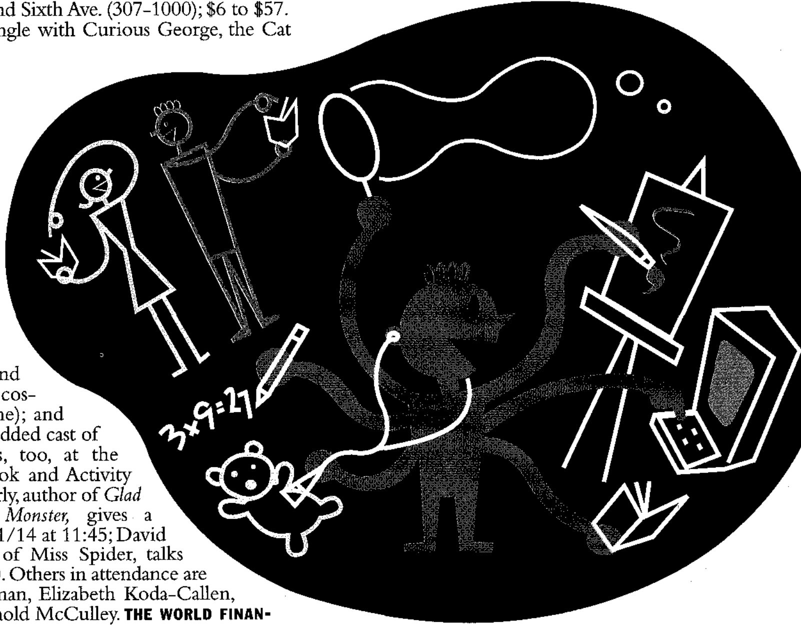
Children's Events

et Smart—A strictly un-virtual information vortex about all things having to do with children, "The Smart Parent Expo" (see illustration) is a gathering of representatives from local children's museums, child-related businesses, educational-media companies, authors, and storytellers. Expect strolling characters, play areas, hat-making sessions, storytelling, salesmanship, seminars, and plenty of kids. 11/15 to 11/16 from 10 to 6. **THE NEW YORK COLISEUM,** 59th St. and Broadway (869-0956). $10 for adults, $3 for children over 3. (A portion of the proceeds from ticket sales will benefit various children's charities.)●

stening In—Pianist Jeffrey Siegal accompanies the National Symphony Orchestra in a bargain **CARNEGIE HALL FAMILY CONCERT** for kids ages 7 and up, based on the theme of children. The concert, conducted and introduced by Leonard Slatkin, includes John Carpenter's "Adventures in a Perambulator," Debussy's "Children's Corner Suite," and Mozart's "Ah, vous dirai-je, Maman." The program 's introduced with stories told by Charlotte Blake Alston and a performance by ten Suzuki-trained violinists, ages 4 to 12. 11/14; preconcert activities begin at 1; the concert itself starts at 2. 154 W. 57th St. (247-7800). $5.●

Happening Brain Food

he theory behind the Smart Parent Expo is that learning can be ntertainment (and vice versa). Kids can have their teddy bears examined (by Mount Sinai Hospital staff) while parents get expert adce on financial planning, child safety, and how to make brownies haped like letters of the alphabet. November 15 and 16 at the ew York Coliseum. See listings.



A Christmas Carol—Hal Linden and Roddy McDowall alternate as Scrooge in this vast production with many costume changes and scenic spectacles. Before stepping back into the "real world," the audience gets dusted lightly with *faux* snow. 11/18 to 1/4, **THE THEATER AT MADISON SQUARE GARDEN,** 2 Pennsylvania Plaza (307-7171). $25 to $65.

Who Is Sidney Bechet?—Wynton Marsalis hosts a Jazz for Young People Concert about the legendary jazz clarinet player. 11/15 at 11 and 1. **ALICE TULLY HALL, LINCOLN CENTER** (721-6500). $12 for adults, $8 for anyone under 18.●

Circus Anniversary—"Big Apple Circus 20 Years" is here for its hometown stint at **LINCOLN CENTER** through 1/11/98, and with it, thankfully, Grandma, the beloved cross-dressing clown. Tickets are $10–$55 (307-4100).

Disney on Ice—*Hercules* once again battles the Cyclops, the Centaur, and a bunch of other bigtime bad guys when the animated movie moves onto ice skates. The songs and actors' voices are taken straight from the movie; the staging is an inventive reinterpretation with elaborate costuming and sets. **CONTINENTAL AIRLINES ARENA** in East Rutherford, New Jersey, 11/18 to 11/23 (516-794-9300); and **NASSAU COLISEUM** in Uniondale, New York, 11/25 to 11/30 (210-935-3900).

Here Comes Santa Claus—Sixty-five years and still (high-) kicking: **THE RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL** Christmas Spectacular is a beloved New York institution mingling innumerable costume changes, a living Nativity scene, and musical chestnuts. 11/7 through 1/4. 50th St. and Sixth Ave. (307-1000); $6 to $57.

Books Alive—Mingle with Curious George, the Cat in the Hat, and Einstein (in costume or online); and meet a star-studded cast of book creators, too, at the Children's Book and Activity Fair. Ed Emberly, author of *Glad Monster Sad Monster,* gives a "chalk talk," 11/14 at 11:45; David Kirk, creator of Miss Spider, talks 11/14 at 12:30. Others in attendance are William Wegman, Elizabeth Koda-Callen, and Emily Arnold McCulley. **THE WORLD FINANCIAL CENTER WINTER GARDEN,** 200 Liberty St. Call for directions (945-0505) and a complete listing of events and readings (695-5550).●

Leach Speaks—Dr. Penelope Leach, British childrearing expert and author, speaks on the challenges facing families in part of a series called "Parenting for the Millennium." 11/11 at the **92ND ST. Y,** 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100). $18.●

Chaplin for Children—On roller skates, Charlie Chaplin impersonates an aristocrat, wrecks a restaurant, and beats a bully in *The Rink.* In *The Adventurer,* he's an escaped convict who gets tangled up in a case of mistaken identity after he rescues a damsel in distress. The twelve-member Paragon Ragtime Orchestra accompanies the screenings with suitably zippy, heart-palpitating music of the period. 11/15 at 2. **TILLES CENTER,** Long Island University, C.W. Post Campus, Route 25A, Brookville (516-299-3100).●

Phantom of the Opera—Theatreworks/USA's interpretation of the mystery set around the Paris Opera is for kids ages 5 and up. 11/15, 11/16, 11/22, and 11/23 at 12:30, with an additional 10:30 A.M. performance on 11/16. **PROMENADE THEATER,** Broadway and 76th St. (627-7373). $18.50.

Singing Puppets—A musical *Puff the Magic Dragon* is presented on the small **PAPAGENO PUPPET THEATER** stage for children up to about 7. *Hansel and Gretel,* a 45-minute version of Humperdinck's opera, is performed by rod and hand puppets with accompaniment by lyric soprano Susan Delery Whedon—who also plays all the parts and makes the puppets. Weekends through December 31, with additional performances during Christmas week. *Puff the Magic Dragon* is at noon, *Hansel and Gretel* at 1:30. 462 Columbus Ave., bet. 82nd and 83rd Sts. (874-3297); $5.

Cultural Crossover—Some of the free classes for high-school students at the **METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART** are strictly about drawing; others, like "Degas and the Senses"—which ends up in the studios of Carnegie Hall—are about putting the art in a broader context. 11/15 from 10 to 4. Uris Center for Education, ground floor, Fifth Ave. entrance near 81st St. Registration is required (650-2832).●●

Freebie on Broadway—Theatergoers who buy one *full-price ticket get an additional ticket at no* charge for a child under 18 on four consecutive Tuesdays—1/20, 1/27, 2/3, and 2/10/98—as part of **"KIDS NIGHT ON BROADWAY."** Curtains go up an hour early, at 7, on those nights. Through 11/19. Telecharge, 239-6200; Ticketmaster, 307-4100; information, 563-2929.

Rafferty Rescues the Moon—A musical puppet show about a young Irish boy who sets out to rescue the moon when it lies at the bottom of the Slaney River, swallowed by a giant fish. Weekends at 1 and 3, through 1/4/98. **THE IRISH REPERTORY THEATRE,** 132 W. 22nd St. (727-2737); $20.

Big Is Beautiful—On view at the **AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY,** the ultimate subject matter for an IMAX movie: *Whales.* That's whales singing, whales loving (never in an X-rated way), whales eating, whales shepherding their young for thousands of miles, and whales inexplicably resting with their tails on high—for fun, maybe. Commune with your fellow brainy mammals. Central Park West at 79th St. (769-5200). Admission is $12 for adults and $8.50 for kids, which includes museum entry.

Dark Cowboys and Prairie Queens—The Carpet Bag Theatre presents a musical production that revives the lively yet often forgotten stories of seven black pioneer women—known variously for their gun-totin,' opera-singing, and cigar-chompin' ways, their talent for sculpture, and their run-ins with the laws of the day. Through 11/16. **THE NEW VICTORY THEATER,** 209 W. 42nd St. (239-6200); $10 to $20.●

Cue

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Park/65th St. 5 Rms. Above the hustle and bustle is a beautifully renovated apt with endless views. Decorative fireplace, washer-dryer, garage. $950K. Excl. (ID#42479)
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40s E. 6 Rms. Spacious 1,600 sf home. 3 BRs, 3 marble baths, formal dining room, 3 terraces, windowed eat-in kitchen. $725K, CC $639, tax $598. (ID#7212)
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70s E. 5.5 Rms. 3 BRs, 3 baths, 2 WBFPs, cherry wood eat-in-kitchen, lrg dining foyer, mint condition. Washer-dryer. Quiet, tree-lined street. Prewar bldg. $725K. Exclusive. (ID#19923)
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70s E/Third Ave. 4.5 Rms. Beautifully renovated 2 BR, 2 bath with 200 sf terrace. Washer-dryer, huge closets, 24hr full service building. Sunny. Low, low mt $1,278. Asks $599K. Excl. (ID#20539)
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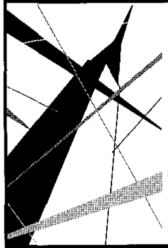

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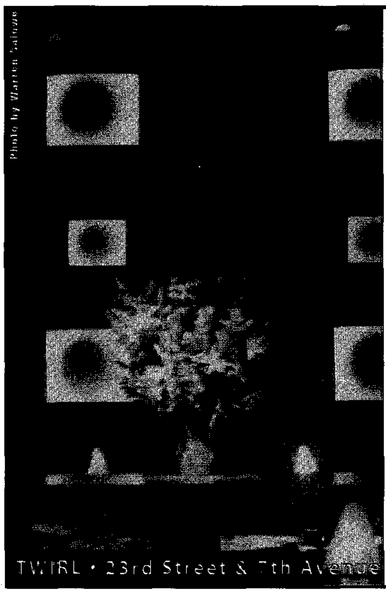

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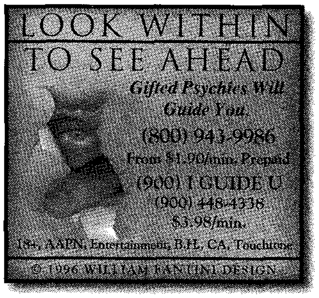
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Tall, Dark And Handsome—35, former *musician/male model, now successful* NYC physician. Looking for a woman, 25-31, who shares my interests in the sophisticated NY life. I love French wines, Beethoven, old movies and travel. I'm attracted to women with ballerina physiques, great sense of humor and Madison Avenue *sophistication. Photo.* 9322 ✉ ☎

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City Girl, Southern Heart—I am down-to-earth, happy, very pretty, blond hair, blue eyes, 33 and Protestant. You are emotionally and financially secure, 5'10" plus, under 43, fit, fun and witty. Note/photo, please. 9372 ✉ ☎

Handsome, Successful, With Style—51, 195 lbs, 6'1", in fantastic shape, Jewish, great sense of humor, athlete - loves all sports, dancing, the beach and is very spiritual. Looking for a pretty lady, 33-40, with same interests, in great shape, to spend the rest of our lives together. Note/photo/phone. 9293 ✉

Intelligent, Attractive, Sophisticated—Slim Jewish lady, 50s, active, caring, with a sense of humor. Seeks a nice gentleman for a serious relationship. 9310 ✉

Pretty—Slender, sensual, stylish, smart, secure "sweetheart" seeks best friend/ lover for life, with good-looking, fit, refined, romantic, 50s "nice guy". 9277 ✉☎

Exceptional Woman—39, Ivy, ex-ballerina - likes skiing, sailing, theater. Seeks a man, 40-50. Bio/photo. 9418 ✉ ☎

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Strictly Personals

Strictly Personals is a weekly feature. **Cost is $37.00 per line,** two line minimum. Approximately 36 characters equal 1 line. Limited abbreviations. Add $35.00 fo NYM Box Numbers. Leave 12 spaces at the end of your ad for box number. Check or credit card information must accompany ad order (no cash or money order accepted). First-page placements are available for a production cost of $50.00. **Mail responses are forwarded continuously for six weeks and phone response lin is open for 4 weeks after issue date** (phone service is not automatic and must be requested by the advertiser). To place an ad with credit card (VI, MC, AMEX), ca 212-779-7500, fax 212-779-2449 or send personal check or credit card information with advertisement to: **Strictly Personals, New York Magazine, 2 Park Avenue 11th Floor, New York, NY 10016. Advertisers must include home address and daytime phone.** All ads accepted at the discretion of the publisher. **New Yorl Magazine is not responsible for printing errors and omissions.** Unless Publisher is notified in writing, by placing an ad in New York Magazine and purchasing NYM Box Number, the advertiser agrees that New York Magazine can act on your behalf to discard advertising circulars.

New York's Premier Matchmaker
• NOW ALSO ON LONG ISLAND •
As featured in NY Times, Crain's NY Business, CNN, CBS, CNBC, ABC, FOX News, BBC, "London" Independent and Cosmopolitan

Are you someone special who isn't meeting that special someone? Don't be discouraged. If you are successful, sincere, emotionally mature and ready for a permanent relationship, please consult with me. In the most confidential, personal way, I will introduce you to the someone special you've been looking for. The traditional ways of meeting someone are gone. Today, quality people prefer to meet through introductions. My clients are extremely attractive, educated, accomplished people. In the most dignified manner, allow me to introduce you to each other. I make meaningful introductions that can lead to long-lasting relationships.

Denise Winston

By appointment only 212-935-9350 NY
310-276-0072 BEVERLY HILLS

Ready For Real Love—Smart, single, attractive, slender, successful professional, grown-up woman. Love my work and I need to love a good man to make life complete. Seeking masculine, sane man, 45-60, for mutually satisfying relationship. Man with kids okay. Nice lips a plus. Photo, please. 9423 ✉

Intelligent—44, 5'8", slim, white Jewish male who enjoys dining out, exercising and museums, desires to meet a nonsmoking, sincere and emotionally secure woman to share common interests. Please reply only if genuinely interested. 9422✉☎

Idealistic But Eminently Earthbound—Man, 40s, 5'10", attractive, trim, clean-cut, accomplished, optimistic, quietly courageous, refined but unpretentious, passions for politics and classical music, intractable dry wit - seeks woman for mutual inspiration, marriage and family. Substantial note appreciated. 9406 ✉

Magnetize Me—Elegant, intelligent, pretty and petite, former dancer, potential skier - seeks cultured, fiscally and physically fit, 40s man to play and grow with. We enjoy eclectic dining, the arts and walks in the country, any country. Note. 9408 ✉

YAZ! Have a Great Time or Your Money Back!

PREMIER PARTY for Young Jewish Professionals (22-35)

WEBSTER HALL
Saturday 7 PM
November 15, 1997
ADMISSION: $20
For Info: (800) 749-7664

If you're not having fun and want to leave within ½ hour after you arrive, tell us why, and we'll refund your money.

Brunette Donna Reed—(Attractive, fun, musical) seeking a Jimmy Stewart to share a wonderful life. Tennis and theater buff, 35, looking for a kindred soul. 9303 ✉

Sweet And Striking—Very attractive Jewish female, 40, 5'6", thin, is looking for an exceptional guy who is tall, professional, romantic, easygoing, with a good heart and sense of humor. Don't hesitate - this could be one of the good ones! Note/phone/photo. 9382 ✉ ☎

I'm Self-Employed, Early 50s—I have been in business for a long time and I enjoy what I do. I also enjoy the good things in life such as trips, good music, good restaurants, etc, etc. Now I am divorced and I have no one to enjoy and share the above with. If you would like to be the one, let's get together. 9298✉

Pretty Woman—38, blond, green-eyed, vivacious and curvaceous, Ivy-educated, East Side beauty consultant/writer, decidedly feminine, polished and upbeat, seeks older, distinguished executive gentleman to share travel, foreign movies, the arts, friendship and a little (or a lot) romance. Note/photo. Manhattan only. 9287 ✉

Successful Businessman—White Christian male, 28, 5'11", 180 lbs, brown hair, blue eyes, intelligent, with traditional values. Enjoy the country, the ocean and new experiences. Seeking fun, sincere white female - beautiful inside and out. Note and photo. 9321 ✉

I'm 30—Jewish professional female, very pretty, petite, intelligent, athletic and sharp. Be 31-38, and ready to find the right one. Note/photo/phone. 9403 ✉

Shapely, Sophisticated Cocoa-Brown—Single female, 34, 5'8", seeks single male, any race, 35-50, 6' plus. We're both professional, financially well-off, adventurous, well-traveled, athletic and passionate. You love the country as much as you love the city, and feel comfortable in jeans or a suit. We will be lovers and friends for committed long-term relationship. No disease/drugs/drinkers/smokers. 9402 ✉ ☎

Casting Call—LI widow, classy, caring, attractive, nonreligious Jewish, seeks leading professional man, 48-55, with a sense of humor, nonsmoker. 9394 ✉

Cute, Funny Professional Guy—5'8", 150 lbs - interests include biking, fitness, wine, books and dining out. Seeking successful, attractive, slim, intelligent nonsmoker, 35-45. Photo a must. 9393 ✉

Sexy, Fun Jewish Female—32, brown hair/eyes, 110, 5'2". Photo. 9427 ✉ ☎

Beautiful, Bright, Slim—37, Jewish professional who is athletic, fit, has varied interests and is fun to be with, would like to meet an intelligent, sincere professional male, 36-45, for a lasting relationship. Note/photo appreciated. 9333 ✉ ☎

32, Attractive Christian Male—Entrepreneur - seeks marriage-minded woman, 25-32, for an exciting yet stable relationship. 9376 ✉ ☎

Single Jewish Female—45, 5'5", tall athletic (enjoys tennis, travel, dinin out, shows), easygoing. Seeks singl Jewish male, 42-48, who is athletic an has similar interests. Photo optional, phone number, please. 9286 ✉

Wheeler-Dealer—Needs his muse. Help Intelligent, wealthy, looker - muscular slender, blah blah blah - needs smart, tall skinny, okay-looking dressed/dynamit naked, woman to help with real choices not bagels or bialys. Write before th fortune is gone. 9433 ✉

Sharing—Sunsets, laughter and warmth Gentle nature lover who enjoys easy outdoors and culture, seeks female soul mate Slim male, 55 (looks younger). 9387 ✉

European Jewish Male—40, 6'2", 18 lbs, dark hair, sensitive, caring, slightl intellectual - enjoys traveling, hiking an biking (the Jewish way - moderately) classical concerts and movies. Seek Jewish female, 29-35, for serious relationship. If you are friendly, intelligen have a good sense of humor, why don you write me? Voluptuous, full-figure preferred. Photo appreciated. 9309 ✉

Handsome, Successful And Confident–Businessman with a passion for the gre outdoors and fine restaurants, seek bright, outgoing, attractive and slend woman, 25-35, to settle down with an share what's been one wonderful li so far. Note and photo. 9299 ✉

Slightly Exotic, Definitely Pretty–Woman, long silky hair, smart, spirite sexy, slim. Seeks handsome man, 37-4 intelligent and unpretentious, exciting b stable. Note/phone/photo please. 9391✉

Unique—Accomplished, down-to-eart honest, humorous - enjoy outdoor culture, NYC. Jewish male, 5'8", 40 seeks woman, 30s, nonsmoker, feminin slim, joint relationship. Photo. 9257✉☎

Handsome, Articulate Professional–PhD, 40, athletic, genuinely warm, Jewis seeks slim, pretty, intellectually curio woman, 28-40. Photo please. 9323 ✉☎

Attractive LI Female—Green-eye slim, 50. Seeks fit, intelligent male, 49-5 to enjoy dining, walks, movies, puzzle NY Times, laughs - together! 9292 ✉

Striking Blond—Sparkling blue eye bubbly personality, sophisticated Was 32, 5'6", very fit, seeks single white mal tall, handsome professional, athletic ty (30-39), who is outgoing, adventuro and knows how to laugh and enjoy li Note/photo, please. 9434 ✉ ☎

Marriage-Minded—Divorced Jewish m - 5'8", 49, educated, nonsmoker, lik biking, movies and romance. Seeks peti attractive, emotionally available fema to age 45, with no fuzzy pets. 9386 ✉

Beautiful Redhead—Tall, slend professional woman seeking tall, sli successful professional or businessman meaningful relationship. Appropriate a 54-68. Note/photo if possible. 9308 ✉ ☎

orth The Wait—Jewish female, PhD, ts of energy, passion for life. Youthful/ thletic, 40, 5'3", shapely, natural auty - seeks Jewish male, 35-plus, comunicative, affectionate, inquisitive, for lationship/family. Note/photo. 9400 ✉☎

inance Guy, 41—(No kids) handsome, , athletic and unconventional, seeks telligent, tall, slim, attractive woman ith no dependents, who skis, sails, lfs...and wants a family. Photo/letter/ one. 9291 ✉

triking, Pretty Woman—Athletic, 10", *Wonder Woman figure, showgirl* gs, great sense of humor, warm, fun, wn-to-earth, slightly mischievous, seeks fit, kind man to fall in love with, 5'9" us, 30-50. Beach/water lover a big plus. ote/phone/photo, please. 9389 ✉

andsome Lawyer—33, with diverse terests, fun, with a good sense of mor - seeks special, kind, attractive, *nest female attorney, 27-35, with* lectic interests and a passion for culture. oto, please. 9301 ✉

ynamic Woman Sought—Who lives e with passion and lust, appreciates the tistry of life, who must be charismatic, tractive, sensitive and romantic, 35-45, Y/NJ. I am 6'2", handsome, slim and hletic successful designer. Let's explore *'s pleasures together. Photo.* 9318 ✉

ergetic, Attractive, Petite—Creative, ccessful woman looking for counterlture guy who is witty, playful, smart, own-up. Bourgeois Marxists and others friendship and warmth. 9311 ✉

andsome Man—57, 5'6", physically fit, letic, intelligent, successful in business, ll-educated, growing interest in spiritual rsuits. Please send photo. 9432 ✉ ☎

ndsome Hunk Of A Jewish Boy—, lovable, affectionate, fun, familynded, yearns for permanent playmate: n, nonsmoking, about 30, under 6'2", r ex-boyfriend. Photo. 9306 ✉

etty Manhattan PhD—Warm, lively, pely woman, 5'7", enjoys the outdoors, od food, music and the arts. Seeks ring professional man, 47-60, to share nance, adventure and joyous lasting ationship. 9414 ✉

sty Sailor—Seeks lusty sailing mate. passions: sailing, skiing, canoeing, era, science, wilderness, travel, my wn children, poetry, great literature, (I hope) an independent, adventur- woman, 45-55, who has intersecting sions. Photo/note, please. 9102 ✉

ce Man, Single Dad—Looking for e woman, 30-40. I am caring, gener- s, *enjoy traveling, sports and* ntaneity. Photo, please. 9317 ✉

e Mountains, The Met—Mozart to town... These interests and more held friendly, *attractive*, bright, educated, n, fit, down-to-earth professional fele, 37, looking for right guy for serious tionship/kids? Note/photo. 9314✉☎

te, Dynamic Brunette—With captivat- smile, Jewish, athletic (figure skating tennis), very successful - seeks tall, n, educated, monogamous, optimistic le, 30s-40s, to explore friendship and ance. *Recent photo required.* 9442 ✉ ☎

lt-Of-The-Earth Plus Pepper—amic, attractive professional woman h golden retriever, young 51, seeks ve, inquisitive, art- and nature-loving ish male, nonsmoker. 9401 ✉ ☎

Jewish White Male—33, nonsmoker, 5'5" - slim, financially secure, seeking a committed relationship with marriage the objective. Have in mind a lady who matches my interests. I enjoy fine dining, skiing, movies, boating among other leisure activities. For serious respondents. Please reply with recent photo and note. 9281 ✉

Exciting, Tall, Slim And Sexy—Black lady lawyer, 30, enjoys the outdoors, reading and interesting conversation - desires a tall, 30-40, adventurous, intellectual man with a sense of humor. Let's explore the meaning of good living. Photo. 9409 ✉ ☎

Single Catholic Female—37, attractive professional, seeks man, 30-45, secure, honest and fun, to share committed relationship. Note/photo. 9295 ✉

Pretty, Gay White Female—37, living in the West Village, very successful. Enjoys the best in dining - loves theater, film and music. Interested in meeting a feminine, attractive woman with similar interests. Dog lover a plus. 9404 ✉ ☎

Are You A Leg Man?—Attorney, 35, with beauty and brains, blond, 5'5", size 6, green eyes - enjoys cooking, fine dining, film, theater, weekend getaways, travel, running, singing, weight training and animals - looking for a handsome, fit partner for the perfect mix of chemistry, compatibility and commitment. Photo a must. 9338 ✉

Absolutely Terrific—LI professional gal, late 40s, slim, fun, sexy, seeking tallish gentleman, 45-58, for forever. 9417 ✉☎

Handsome Doc—45, dark/hazel, athletic, seeks very pretty, petite, fun female. Phone/photo. 9330 ✉ ☎

Vibrant, Attractive, Slim, Soft—Caring female seeks very bright, successful man, 45 plus, to share it all. 9436 ✉ ☎

Directors:
Andrea McGinty
Debra DeJean
Pamela Mohr
Nancy Kirsch
Jacqueline Castellitto
Jennifer Guterman

The Best Way To Meet People Is Through Friends.

"Even busy professionals want to find romance but they don't have much time to look for it often. An upscale dating service now helps business people improve their personal lives." ***-CNN***

"There had to be a civilized and convenient way to meet potential partners. Wouldn't it be nice if there was a dating service that arranged prescreened lunch dates for busy professionals? So, McGinty did. Her clients are highly educated: About 95% graduated from college, and 80% have post-graduate degrees." ***-FORBES Magazine***

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IT'S just LUNCH!® Inc.
life, love & dessert.®

Seeking Accomplished Man—With character, brains, heart and physical appeal, to enhance life with this attractive, dynamic, fit, successful female professional, 44, brunette - outgoing, unpretentious, fun-loving, conservatory-trained musician with eclectic interests: sailing, skiing, concerts, theater, adventure, travel. Note/photo/phone appreciated. Will reciprocate. 9378 ✉

Handsome, Successful Professional—51, 6'1", 185 lbs, with varied interests (running, European travel, dining out, movies and reading). Seeking very *attractive, slender, bright, affectionate* woman, 38-48, who is also happy and secure. Note/photo/phone. 9379 ✉

party! party!

New York Magazine's

Strictly Personals Kick Off The Holiday Season

Thursday,November 20, 5:30pm-12am

AT THE FABULOUS

COPACABANA

617 W. 57th St. **(great parking and lots of cabs!)**

Admission gets you a wonderful buffet (2 foodstations, fast lines), 25% off Strictly Personals Gift Certificate, Dancing, Romancing, and a great night out!

$25 in advance, $30 at the door. Cash Bar.
Mail check or money order by Nov. 14th to:

New York Magazine Party,
2 Park Ave., NY, NY 10016.

Tickets will be mailed to you and a list will be at the door.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, INCLUDING DISCOUNT PARKING, CALL:

212-545-3684

Government Attorney—42, Jewish, seeks compassionate, spiritual, slightly bohemian Jewish woman with a sense of humor and an interest in the arts. Note/photo. 9413 ✉

You Don't Need To Go To Symphonies—Attractive single female, 31, 5'5", slim, seeks nice, funny, outgoing, financially secure male. 9320 ✉ ☎

Make Me Smile—And you'll win my *heart. Pretty, professional, down-to-earth* female, 37, who loves to hike, cycle, ski, seeks guy with big heart to share the great outdoors. Note/photo/phone. 9279 ✉

Attractive Asian—Designer. Christian, living in Murray Hill. Enjoy sashimi, traveling, skiing. Seek romantic and professional man, 45-55. Photo a must. 9407 ✉

Professional/Businessman—Mid 40s, 5'10", good-looking Manhattanite, athletic (tennis, skiing). Seeks slender and lovely 30-something woman for sincere, lasting relationship. Photo and note (no response without photo). 9435 ✉

Not Just Another Pretty Face, NYC—Looking for that good-looking Jewish professional, 25-32, in-shape, great sense of humor, with a big heart. You won't be disappointed. Note/photo, please. 9315 ✉

Very Handsome, Blue-Eyed—22-year-old male seeks very attractive woman to take merengue lessons and indulge in chocolate with. Photo. 9373 ✉

Great-Looking, Affluent—Thin brunette looking for long-term relationship built on love, trust, respect and emotional stability. Looking for a man who's not afraid to cry or laugh. Only the self-confident and affluent need to apply. Photo. 50-60. 9312 ✉ ☎

Warm, Good-Looking, Selective—Jewish male, 5'9", brown hair, blue eyes, with great smile. I am affectionate, creative, athletic and successful. I'm sensitive to a woman's needs. I enjoy theater, dancing, outdoors, cozy nights. Seeking special woman, 30-38, who is affectionate, attractive, who enjoys similar things. Phone/photo appreciated. 9426✉☎

It's The Prime Of Your Life—And time to meet. Jewish gal, 39, 5'1", tons of fun, very pretty, with beautiful red hair and lots of flair. If you can care, we'd make a really great pair! If you're a clever, handsome, single great guy, warm and kind...you've found yourself a wonderful find! 9288 ✉☎

Strictly Personals

RELIABLE

Since 1982,
New York's smart single
professionals have found
that *special someone* in
New York Magazine
Strictly Personals

212-779-7500

Free-Spirited—Attractive green-eyed lady looking for a nondependent, "fiscally" fit, handsome mix between a cowboy and Fred Astaire, at home on the range or in top hat. Someone not easily intimidated, literate, articulate, 35-50. Photo. 9398 ✉

Cute, Educated Professional—32, enjoys the parks, book stores and coffee shops. Seeks sexy, attractive, seductive female for sensuous intimacy and companionship. Photo appreciated. 9381 ✉

Younger Man—37, bright, handsome, seeks attractive older woman, 47-62, for romantic relationship. Note/pix. 9415 ✉

Beautiful Green-Eyed Doctor—Senior corporate exec (single, white Jewish female, 44), classy, sophisticated, spirited romantic. Loves cycling, hiking, theater, old films, Mozart, Coltrane, Cole Porter, laughing, travel adventures, life. Seeks super-bright, self-assured, adorably handsome counterpart (single, white Jewish male, 40-50) with sparkle and wit. 9384 ✉

Relationship—CT male, 44, seeks Asian lady who enjoys music, wit, current events ...life! It's fall. Let's stroll and talk. 9296 ✉

Two In A Million—The guy seeks the gal. We both are unique/eccentric, adventurous, energetic, very intelligent, well-educated, successful, athletic, in great shape, good-looking and 25-32 years old. We have A-Z interests, are passionate about life (and eventually each other), and will often put a smile on each other's face. Please send note, recent photo and phone. 9429 ✉

Former Male Model—Now businessman, 36, nice chauvinist with traditional values. Desires intelligent, warm, spiritual, passionate woman, 20-38, for relaxed dinners, sporting and concert dates, possible marriage and children. Prefer attractive, long-haired, shapely Italian/Spanish type (but not that important). Note/photo/phone. 9324 ✉

Batman!—M. Keaton look-alike. Single white male, 6'1", 180 lbs, brown hair, blue eyes, Manhattan business professional. Looking for woman who seeks romance/fun/adventure. Late 60s (into that kind of music, plus other eras). Actually, I'm late 30s. Let's go biking/skiing/hiking at my house in CO. I have a sense of humor, big heart. How about you? Letter/phone number and photo. Thank you! 9421 ✉

Striking, Italian-Born—5'1", 110 lbs, sensitive, spirited, insightful, energetic, communicative woman - loves NY culture, dining, dancing, Frank Sinatra, domestic and international travel - financially independent, mother of two grown children. Seeking an assertive, affectionate, witty, playful, truthful, mid-60s gentleman who enjoys strolling through Manhattan arm-in-arm. 9392 ✉

Leggy, Blue-Eyed Brunette—38, slim, pretty, Jewish, seeks tall, Jewish, financially stable, ambitious, athletic man, 35-50, to be my knight in shining armor and share life, love, laughs. Photo/note. 9374 ✉

Gay Woman—Pretty physical therapist, 40, seeking mensch, 30-50. 9331 ✉

Latina Sweetheart Sought—By Jewish professional, 39, tall, handsome, sweet, kind, caring, affectionate, loyal. Seeks soul mate for a lifetime of hugs and kisses. 9377 ✉ ☎

Stunning, Slender Sportswoman—40, professional, (212), seeks someone who believes in relationships, the Knicks, Rangers, the Giants, horses, dining and adventurous traveling. 9336 ✉

Prince Charming With A Great Body—Seeking tall, slim, professional, and beautiful princess, 28-36. I'm 6'1", 37, successful, athletic, exciting, Ivy educated, kind-hearted, passionate. Tell me your thoughts and I'll share mine. I, too, am seeking forever love. Note/photo (looks do matter). 9444 ✉

Man, The Days Are Getting Short—Frank Langella look-alike (huh?). New man (cook and not afraid to cry). Downtown professional. Seeks female, lean and mean (figure of speech), 35-45. Sports-minded (oxymoron?). Existential a plus. (Note/photo). 9405 ✉

Professor Seeks Mary Ann—Single, Jewish professional guy, 33, 5'7", with love of travel, movies in Bryant Park and rollerblading with eight nieces and nephews. Looking for a hiking-boot kinda match with fondness for floppy sweatshirts and Levi's. Send note/photo and copy of your coolest passport stamp. 9397 ✉

Gay Man—38, 5'7", handsome, kind, creative, complicated, seeks partner (30-45) ready to make things work. George Herbert, Pollini, the Kabbalah and what's for dinner are just a few of the things we could talk about. Note/photo/phone. 9289 ✉

party! party!

New York Magazine's
Strictly Personals
Kick Off The
♥♥♥ Holiday ♥♥♥
Season

Thursday,November 20, 5:30pm-12am
At the
Fabulous
COPACABANA
617 W. 57th St. (great parking and lots of cabs!)

Admission gets you a wonderful buffet (2 foodstations, fast lines), 25% off Strictly Personals Gift Certificate, Dancing, Romancing, and a great night out!

$25 in advance, $30 at the door. Cash Bar.
Mail check or money order by Nov. 14th to:

New York Magazine Party,
2 Park Ave., NY, NY 10016.

Tickets will be mailed to you and a list will be at the door.

For more information, including discount parking, call:

212-545-3684

Exceptional Lady Publisher—Fift Avenue Art magazine. Pretty, slir sensual, writes, paints. Loves the ou doors. Seeks exceptional man, 57 plu who is successful, spiritual and read for a new adventure. 9335 ✉

Spring In Paris—I decided to plac this ad sitting in a Paris Bistro eatin by myself... The next time, let's go the together. Me: 40ish female, spunk secure, stylish, sociable and sometimes bit silly. You: seeking a special friend ar lover to hold hands with while strolling i NY, Paris, London, Sydney or Singapor Note/photo, please. 9396 ✉

Seeking Traditional Female—Atypic East Side male, 37, Jewish (nonreligious venture capitalist, honest, affectionat easygoing, funny, handsome, fit, mediu build, clean-cut, brown/green, and on one cavity! Enjoys the arts, travel, tenni golf, dining and red wine. Loves childr and animals. Seeks white femal mid 20s-mid 30s, who is kind, spirite persnickety. Prefer natural appearanc understated elegance. Political and/ religious devotees discouraged. Note ar photo appreciated. 9304 ✉

Sharp Mind—Squash-bucklir Romanian/Israeli intelligentsia - very except when lame, indulging in cultu activities - seeks female (30-38) wi a sharp mind and body for intense whi wind romance leading to playing hous Note/photo. 9328 ✉

Handsome Italian—44, kind, secu business owner, fit, seeking attracti down-to-earth female with kind hea great personality, 30-40. Photo a mu 9416 ✉ ☎

Only Need One Special Woman-Jewish professional male, 58, seeks fem of inner and outer beauty for committ relationship. Note/photo. 9305 ✉ ☎

Pretty PhD—36, tall, slender, upsca good-natured, seeks educated, fit, fun male for long-term relationship. 9375 ✉

It's My First Time!—So be gentle. Fu pretty, blue-eyed sweetheart, 30s, gr gams, warm smile, huge sense of hum I'm a successful, creative, true, fit, ne age Christian - love animals, kids, hik bikes, movies, learning new stuff. Rea for tall, bright, resourceful, good-hear man, 35-45, with similar fancies, desiri marriage, love, respect, joy and a gr romp thru life. Photo/note/phone. 9385 ✉

Mature, Beautiful Woman—Home Paris, art world publisher/NY, fu energetic, seeking handsome Europea cosmopolitan companion, 50s-60s. 9297

Ebullient, Slim Cosmopolitan Lady Cultured, well-traveled, seeks m counterpart, 60 plus. Note/photo. 9246

Successful But Humble!—Handsor accomplished, fit, Jewish, 43, spor clinical psychologist with charm, integr seeks pretty, slender lady, 35-44, w compassion, passion, for best friend, lo for life. Note/photo/phone. 9425 ✉

Handsome And Successful NYC Mar 32, white, brown eyes, black hair, bl Irish, 5'10", 180 lbs - wants to st a lifelong relationship with a sm and beautiful woman. You enjoy roma dinners, movies, dancing and travel. are also looking for a best friend. Nc photo, please. 9412 ✉

MARY ANN MADDEN #895
NEW YORK MAGAZINE COMPETITION

"If Your Honor please, my learned opponent appears to be badgering his own witness."

"Perhaps this will refresh your memory."

"Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you: Is this the face of a pickpocket?"

Above, cine qua pro bono. Competitors are invited to supply an essential, random line from a filmed courtroom sequence.

Results of Competition 892, in which you were asked for awful entries for our Bitter Business directory.

Report: We admit we gave house room to entries far too clever to be called "awful." Frankly, some of the deeply awful entries (the sights, sounds, and scents of our, uh, fragile mortality) caused us pain. Not only *that*, the stock market unravels as we type. It's cold. The cat lost a tooth in the water bowl. Brad never calls. One of those mornings. But do we have to tell *you*?

First Prizes of two-year subscriptions to *New York* to:

TAIL AVIV—Israeli private eye.
Jessica Allen, Gaithersburg, Md.

PROMISE KIPPERS—Organization for men who cannot serve God and salmon.
Inger Pettygrove, Charlottesville, Va.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE—Stationers.
Abigail Chipley, Seattle, Wash.

Runner-up Prizes of one-year subscriptions to *New York* to:

DOWN AT THE HEEL—Boot linings.
Lauren Foley, Cranston, R.I.

MIR BAGATELLE—Memorabilia from the Russian space station.
Emily Sylvester, South Windsor, Conn.

AARDVARK PEST CONTROL—We'll lick your ant problem.
Jim Weis, Atlanta, Ga.

And Honorable Mention to:

SEIZE SPAN—Bridge repossessions.
Dot Edwards, Galena, Mo.

YEHUDI AND THE BLOWFISH—Kosher seafood restaurant.
Joan Ruttenberg, Rockville, Md.

OÙ SONT LES NEIGES DOWNTOWN?—City snow removal.
Brian Bracey, Carrboro, N.C.

RECEDING HEIR LINES—Ancestor tracing.
Craig Wolfson, Spring Valley, N.Y.

FEE FI FO FUMBLE—Customer service for the New York Giants.
Debbie Bennett, Jersey City, N.J.

PICTURE PERFECT—Disappointed with your photo ID? Let one of our photogenic models get your next passport or license.
Anthony Gray, Closter, N.J.

PRETTY PLEAS—Indicted? We can help.
C. Olds, Freeport, Me.

TUT & COME IN—Full-body wraps.
Murray J. Aronson, Long Beach, Miss.

NOSY PARKAS—The giant-penguin look in warm hooded jackets.
Raymond E. Benenson, Niskayuna, N.Y.

GREGORIAN CHANCE—The Official Lottery of the Roman Catholic Church.
Linda Giordano, Florence, Ala.

BAIL CANTO—Singing bondsmen.
Chris Doyle, Burke, Va.

EYE OF NEWT—Speaker-activated security cameras.
Valerie May, Washington, D.C.

SIGNFELLED—Billboard removals.
Bill Harriman, Niantic, Conn.

BELLE WEATHER—Southern School of Charm and Meteorology.
Abigail Dobbs, Florence, Ala.

DON'T CALL US—We'll call you, anytime, anywhere, on your cellular phone. Don't be caught driving with your hands on the wheel.
Edmund Conti, Summit, N.J.

THRONE FOR A LOSS—Tax consultant to Her Majesty.
Marc Doyle, Newark, Del.

HELP ME RWANDA—East Africa charity.
Tanner Foust, Longmont, Colo.

HURRY KRISHNA—Hindu hot line.
Lucy Oblonsky, Newark, Del.

MYTH INFORMATION—Creative résumés.
Elaine Stallworth, Willow Grove, Pa.

ANCHOR WATT—Marina electrical hookups.
Sarah Gay, Durham, N.C.

LOCUTION, LOCUTION, LOCUTION—Voice coach.
Paula Doherty, Tiverton, R.I.

BUY POLAR—Arctic Realtor.
Louise Jackson, Somerset, Mass.

WHO'S SIOUX?—Registry of famous Native Americans.
Herb Martinson, Croton, Md.

JUST OFFAL—Specialty butcher.
J. Bickart, N.Y.C.

AUDIOS AMIGOS—Sound systems.
Natalie Wittenbrook, San Francisco, Calif.

SUNNY AND CHAIR—Patio furniture.
Karen Bracey, Burke, Va.

LYRE, LYRE—Authenticator of musical instruments.
Bruce Karp, Hackensack, N.J.

CHEAPER BY THE DOCENT—Discount museum tours.
Wendy Gottlieb, New Haven, Conn.

BOUNTY HUNTERS—Rare and vintage paper towels.
L. Klein, N.Y.C.

STYLE-IMPAIRED?—Donate your clothes to the blind. 1-800-MR NEHRU.
S. Leader, Narbeth, Pa.

HOG HEAVEN—Swine hospice.
David Rozenson, Newton, Mass.

ARIADNE AUF NACHOS—Mexican opera bouffe.
Theodore G. Zavales, Bergenfield, N.J.

THIRTYSOMETHINGS—Depression glass, breadline photos, more.
Mark Wolfson, Spring Valley, N.Y.

THE GRAVY BOAT—Offshore catering.
Rhida High, Coral Springs, Fla.

BULL & BARE—Wall Street's most popular topless bar.
Joel F. Crystal, Scarsdale, N.Y.

NOSTALGIC BEVERAGES—Old-fashioned, unfiltered tap water.
Cassie Graizzaro, Dumont, N.J.

CHAIR OF THE DOG—Sit, Rover (but not on the couch).
Gene Schinto, Shelburne, Vt.

HIDE AND ZEKE—Games for the entire family from the Bible Belt.
Mary Fullham, San Francisco, Calif.

9 P.M. IN THE GARDEN OF GOOD AND EVIL—Highlights of the '96–'97 Knicks playoffs.
Paul Frankovich, Philadelphia, Pa.

SADDAM HIDE AND SEEK—Missiles, bombs, nerve gas.
Calvin Otto, Juneau, Alaska

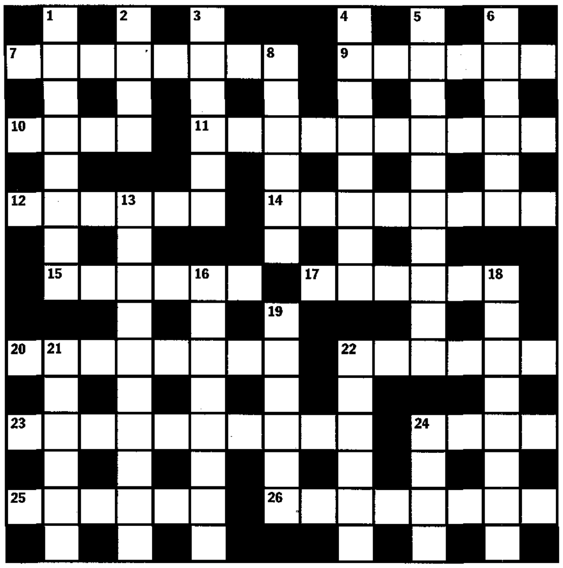
SORTS UNLIMITED—Ready to replenish your supply when you're out. Free home delivery.
Steven Shields, Bronxville, N.Y.

Competition Rules: POSTCARDS, PLEASE, TYPEWRITTEN IF POSSIBLE. ONE ENTRY ONLY should be sent to Competition Number 895, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022-6999, or e-mailed to 104700.2563@compuserve.com. It must be received by November 21. Editor's decisions are final, and entries become property of *New York*. Results and winners' names will appear in the December 22–29 issue.

The 'Guardian' Crossword

ACROSS

7 Out-of-reach item when there's very little money. (8)
9 Window fitting that's dear, having wood in it. (6)
10 The guy receiving nothing will make complaint. (4)
11 Has in mind to mend tears in net. (10)
12 Sort of dog for the scholarly lot? (6)
14 A military leader in charge, efficient yet courteous. (8)
15 No longer insolent, being clever. (6)
17 The maggot is anything but aggressive. (6)
20 Where the French supporter backed staff. (8)
22 Housing fit only for pigs went first as arranged. (6)
23 Businessman getting cold riding farm machinery. (10)
24 The boot should hold a fair amount. (4)
25 About a hundred take on fuel and start back. (6)
26 Green in the main? (3-5)



DOWN

1 Lawyers, over a period, created peers. (8)
2 The contents of most, unfortunately, are shocking. (4)
3 Order, given unlimited credit. (6)
4 Value a quiet compliment. (8)
5 Country people carrying cash? That's a joke! (10)
6 12's cozy accommodation. (6)
8 With Access a most desirable rich cake may be obtained. (6)
13 Break apart, one is working. (10)
16 Gather around helper returning from the centre. (8)
18 Training royalty in duty. (8)
19 Not charged for rags—it would appear wrong. (6)
21 A party the leftist liked very much. (6)
22 Call out second best. (6)
24 The kind alternative in a way. (4)

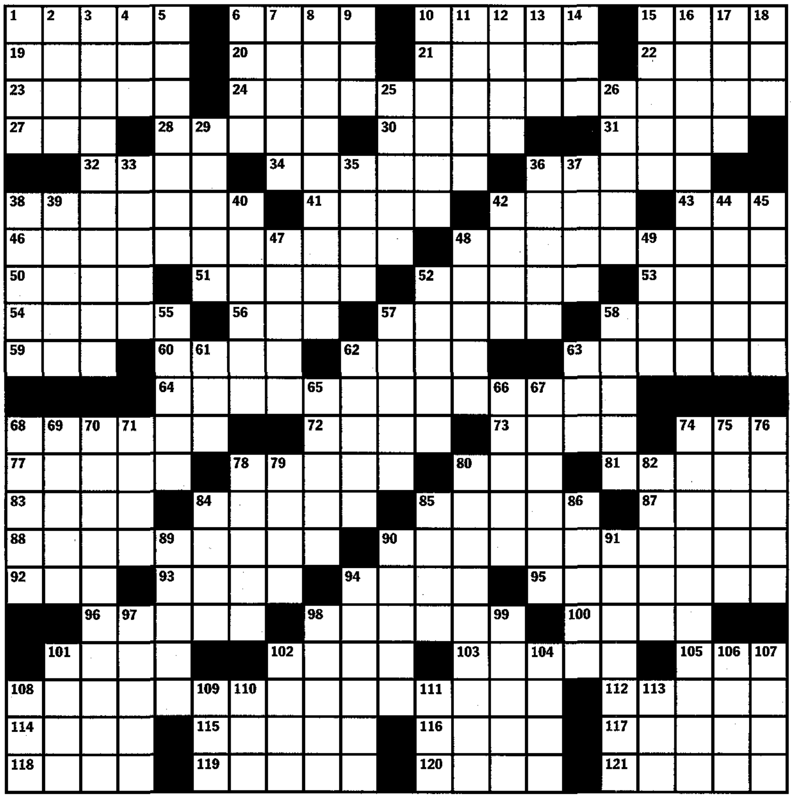
'Anagrammed Pop Composers': 'Cue' Crossword • By Maura B. Jacobson

ACROSS

1 Chocolate drink
6 Between do and fa
10 "Golden" Mongol group
15 After kick and take
19 Howling with laughter
20 Microwave device
21 Internet correspondence
22 Role for Liz
23 Becomes liquidy
24 HE MAY COACH A GIRL
27 Mystery-story pioneer
28 Siskel's colleague
30 Chartres's river
31 Octopi have eight
32 —— colada
34 Nukes
36 Public figure, familiarly
38 Nimoy of "Star Trek"
41 Square footage
42 Jaw flab
43 Not home
46 A HAND ROLLER
48 TENSE JULY
50 Bering Sea island
51 Make a nasal appraisal
52 Landed estate
53 Walk through water
54 Soothsayers
56 Seller's come-ons
57 Stationer's sale
58 Export from Ireland
59 Timetable abbr.
60 Bitsy's go-with
62 Upholstered piece
63 Fictional Elmer
64 NEED GUN TO KILL
68 Kind of ring
72 Tra followers
73 Singer Coolidge
74 Give the elbow
77 "The Lady ——," 1935 song
78 Mild, as weather
80 Golf norm
81 —— la Cité, Paris
83 Environmental sci.
84 City slickers
85 Mendicant monk
87 Present-day Persia
88 MAN OILS UP
90 INDIAN MODEL
92 Corp. abbr.
93 A-one
94 After-bath sprinkle
95 Nanook's people
96 Gets an earful
98 Better bleached
100 Flier on a string
101 Nincompoop
102 Diva's big moment
103 Fido's restraint
105 Keystone komic
108 NO SHIP NEEDS THEM
112 Daughter of the Curies
114 "Sidewalks of New York" start
115 Ogling
116 "Money —— object"
117 Velvet-voiced Mel
118 Highbrow
119 Thoracic organs
120 Romanov title
121 Proprietor

DOWN

1 Tenting site
2 Hydrox rival
3 POORER CELT
4 Feed-bag bit
5 Weapons storehouse
6 Architect Mies van der ——
7 City east of Lisbon
8 Spaghetti accompaniments
9 Gerund suffix
10 Wife of Priam
11 Sharif and Bradley
12 Steak order
13 Soften the lighting
14 One of the Whitneys
15 Yellow pigment
16 Flashy
17 Service charges
18 Costa del ——
25 Neighbor of Saudi Arabia
26 Phone-bill units
29 Troubadours
33 Hemingway's "—— Time"
35 Turgenev's birthplace
36 Use crayons
37 Wide-mouthed pitche
38 World's highest capit
39 Either Sprat
40 Tablecloth fabric
42 Flag Day month
44 Beneath
45 Word with bopper
47 Tint again
48 Where Mount Aso is
49 Minnesota baseballer
52 "Godfather" society
55 Backed, with "with"
57 Parrot's moniker
58 Hawaiian veranda
61 Exhumed Egyptian
62 Closes with a bang
63 Caught the meaning
65 Much-hyped sitcom 1997
66 Galahad's quest
67 Blustering speech
68 Cesare of the Met
69 Of ancient Peruvians
70 Most cantankerous
71 Dickens girl
74 NO MERE JERK
75 Hersey's bell town
76 Sandhogs' ailment
78 Deprives of an airlin seat
79 Flurries of excitemen
80 Invaluable
82 Put restrictions on
84 Saint Laurent's mentor
85 Milliner's material
86 Jeopardizes
89 Kin of strep
90 Water nymph
91 Ruler of 48-Down
94 Items
97 Containing nothing
98 Needing correcting
99 Queen: Sp.
101 Part of a constellati
102 C —— Charlie
104 Alias for Cupid
106 "This one's ——"
107 House of Lords member
108 Rachel Carson subje
109 "Electric" fish
110 Washington Sq. campus
111 Gold record
113 Ticket information



Solutions to last week's puzzles appear on page

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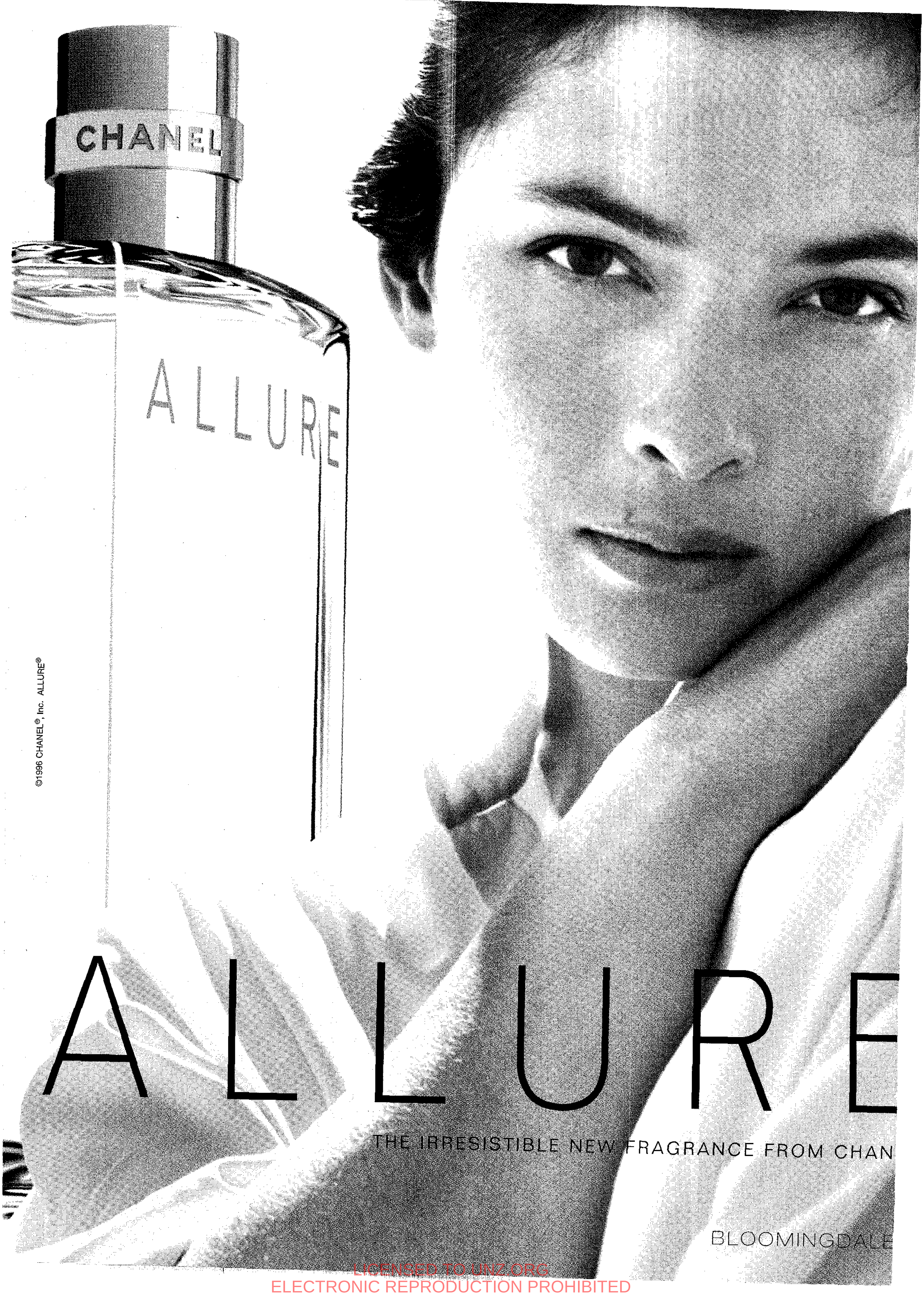
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